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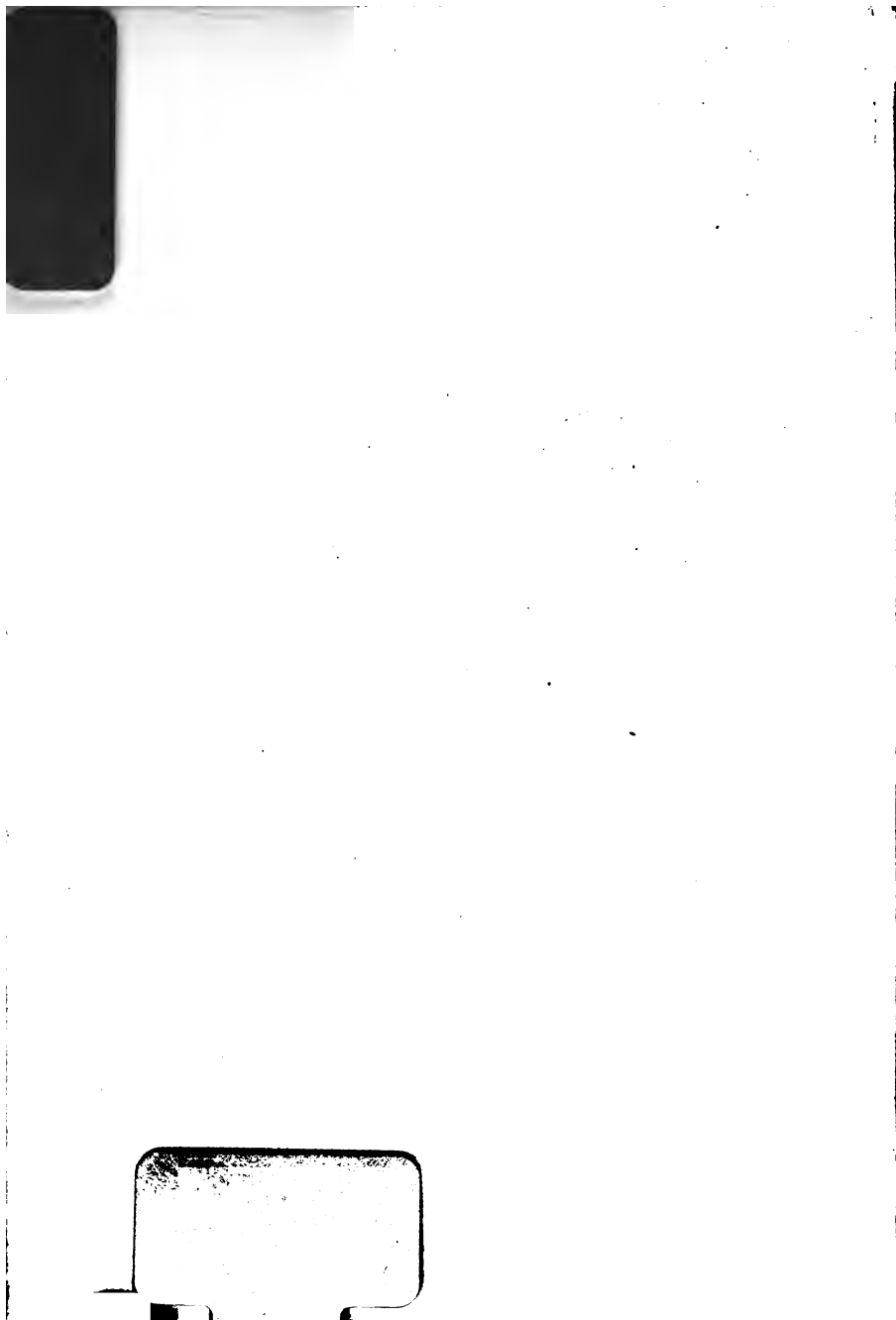
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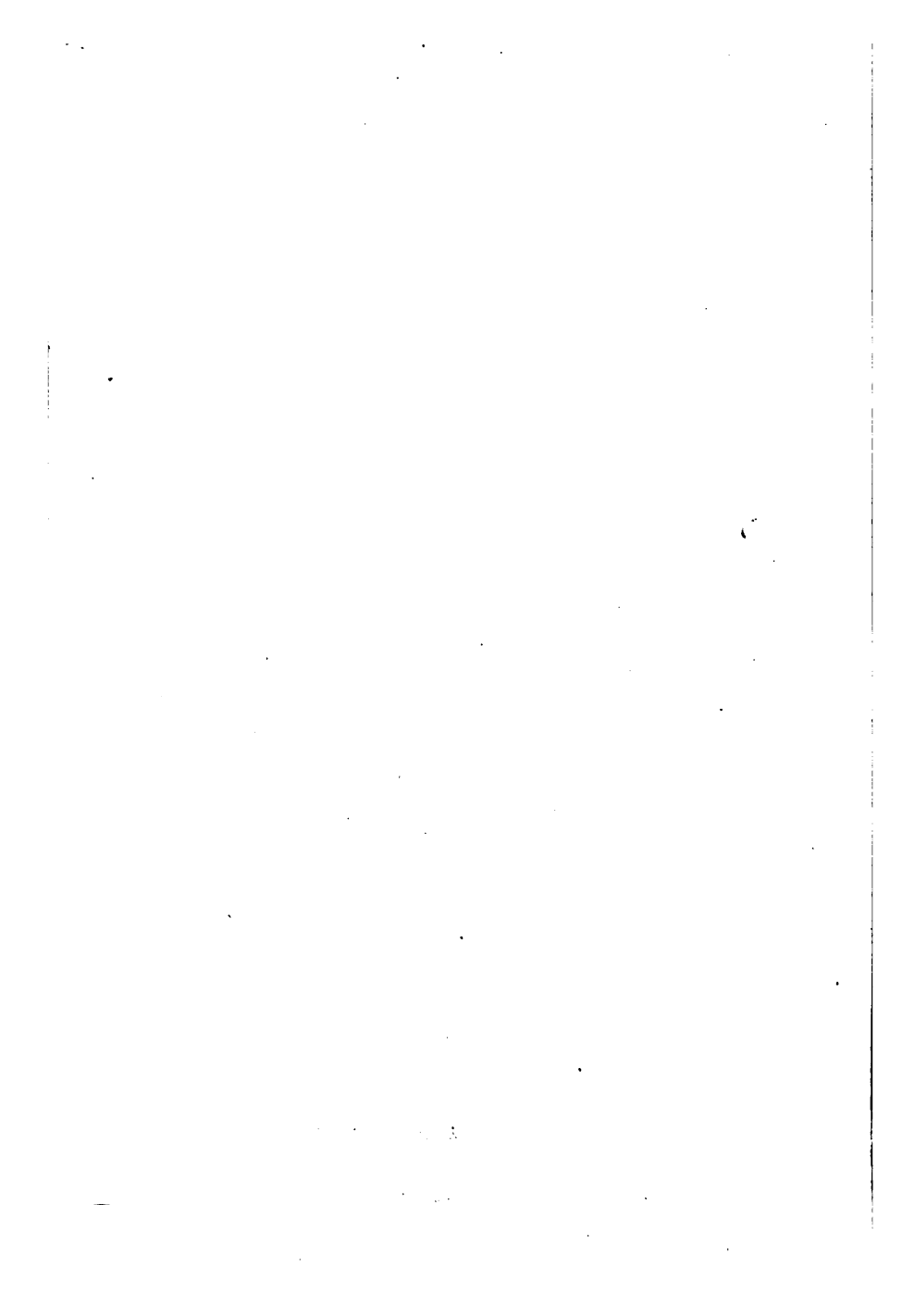


Perigot

A. B. I.

— 1. —

**A SCRAP-BOOK OF PICTURES
AND FANCIES**



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A SCRAP-BOOK OF PICTURES AND FANCIES

BY

WILLIAM LEIGHTON

AUTHOR OF "THE HISTORY OF OLIVER AND ARTHUR," "THE SONS
OF GODWIN," "AT THE COURT OF KING EDWIN," ETC.



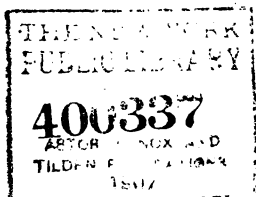
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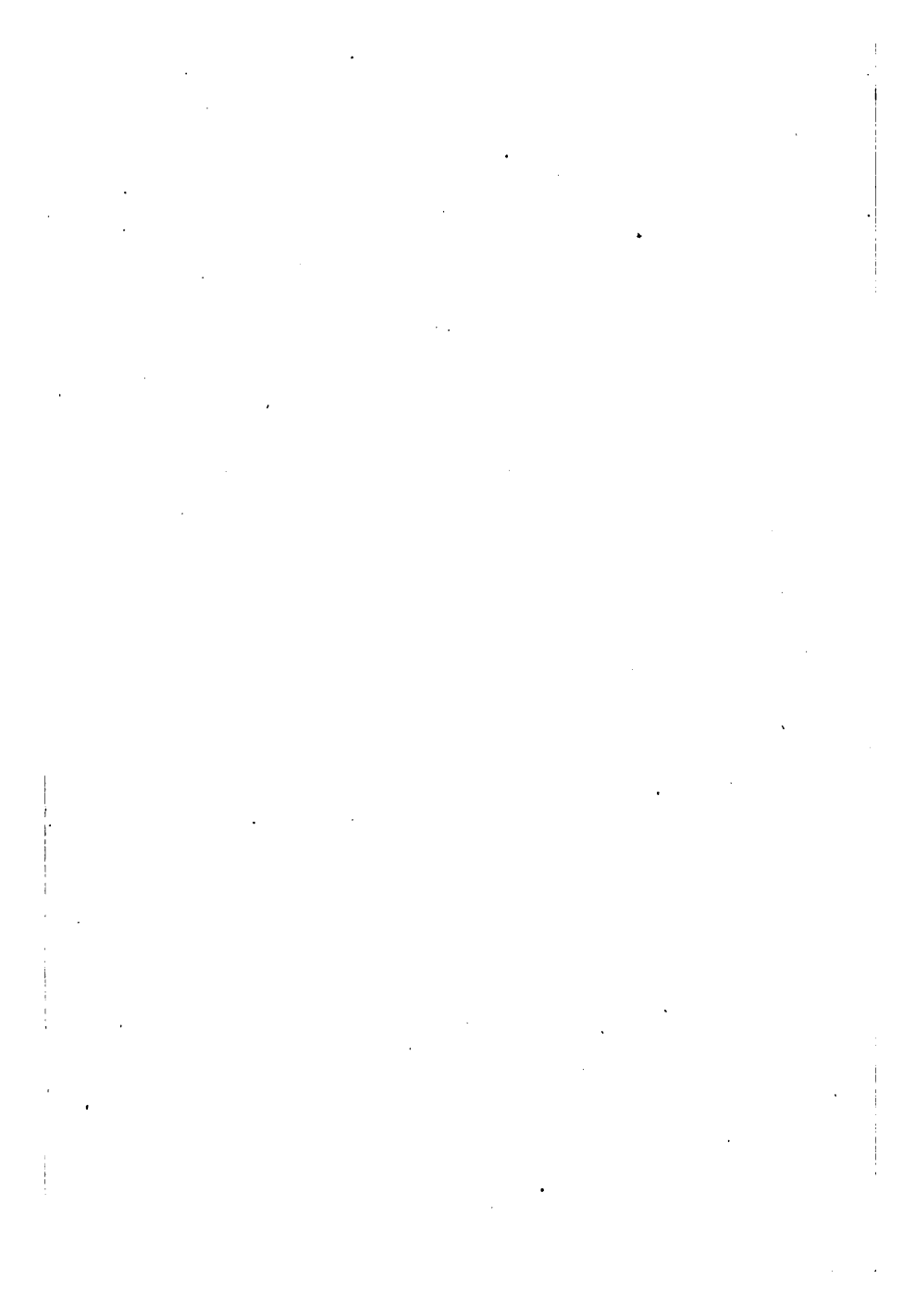


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WILLIAM LEIGHTON

The Lakeside Press
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CHICAGO

200 112

TO
MY WIFE, DAUGHTER AND SISTER,
WHO HAVE MADE FOR ME THE POETRY OF MY LIFE,
THIS VOLUME IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED



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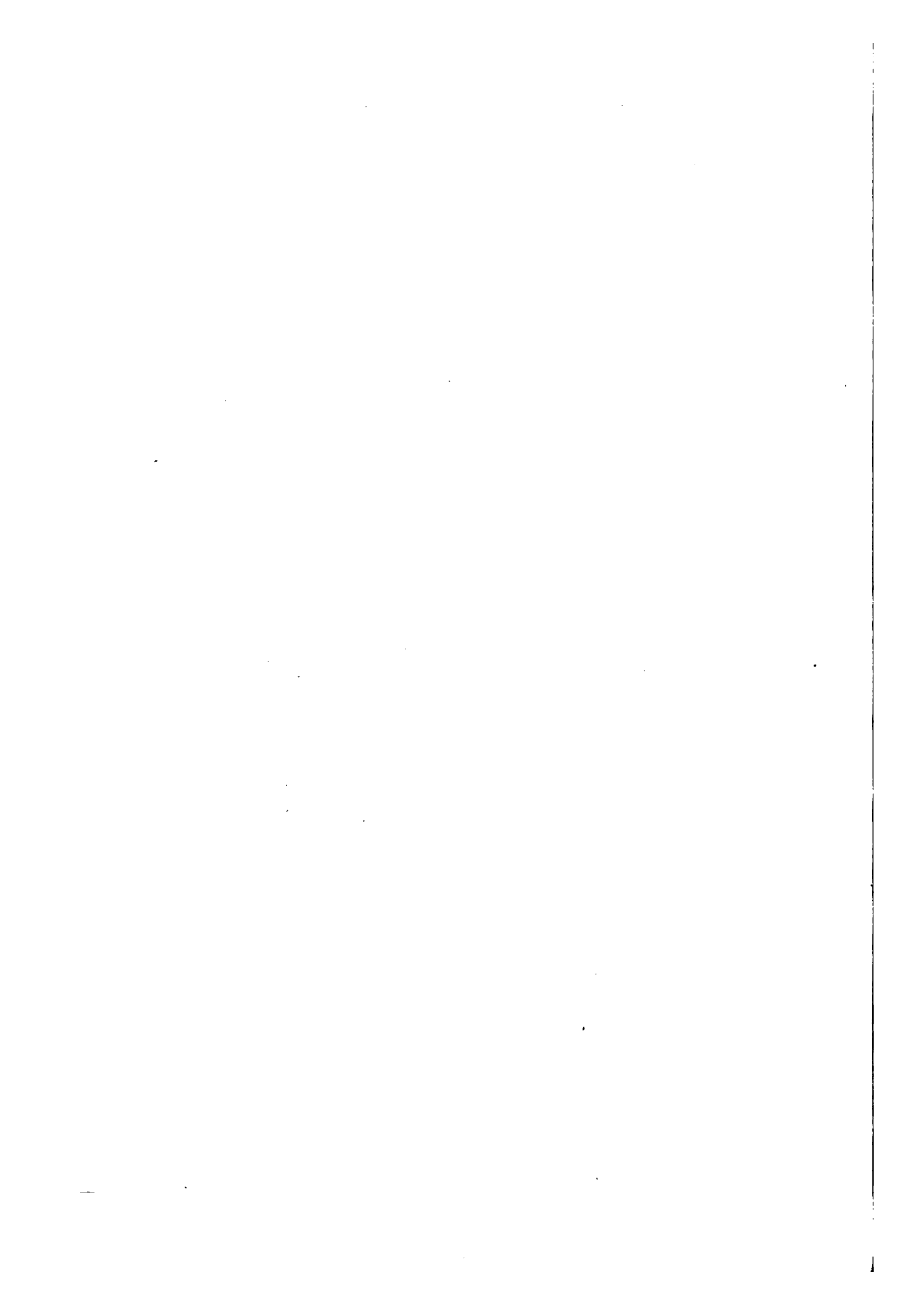
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Go forth, my book, and seek thy modest way,
Not as a challenge to the world of art,
For such is not thy less ambitious part:
Thy fairest hope is that thy verses may
Sometimes be lighted with a golden ray
Of fancy, or of truth, to reach the heart
Of generous readers, there perchance to start
Imagination's soul-inspiring play.

A homely verse may have a thought divine,
As every soul, however rude it be,
Hath still its share of man's divinity.
So go thou forth; and if thou may'st not shine
Among the famous ones, yet happily
Some gentle readers may be pleased with thee.



Pictures and Fancies

Home

Amidst oppressive toils that vex and wear,
Behold a calm and lovely angel rise,
The angel of the Home! and weary care,
Before her sweet and glorious presence, flies;
The talisman in her enchanting eyes,
A pure, unselfish love. Invisible
Unto the world perchance, she brings her prize
To crown a life it deems most miserable,
And softens discords harsh to harmonies ineffable.

How many hearts have felt, but never told,
Their dearest longings! hid beneath the show
Of false serenity and aspect cold
The fondest wishes that the soul can know,
The warmest impulses that ever flow
In human breasts! And can we dare to ask,
What thought, love, wish, or passion's burning
glow
Was hidden thus, a life-enduring task?
Nay; who hath ever lived that never wore a mask?

Then say not that they do not love who seem
Forever passionless: the heart hath deeps
Of which the shallow thinkers never dream —
Deeps so profound that passion ever keeps
Within their shadows. Think not that he sleeps

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Who doth not chatter every passing thought,
Or tell of each emotion that upleaps:
The poorest heart is by some passion wrought;
And lowly lives full oft with heavenly impulse
fraught.

Where dwelleth man mysterious charms arise
To soothe the harshness of ungentle clime,
Or paint with majesty tempestuous skies,
Firing his heart with grandeur's power sublime
To thoughts or acts that mock the grasp of time;
Enkindling art in rich, luxurious town
That else had lured to indolence or crime;
Inspiring liberty where mountains frown,
Or meditative thought upon the breezy down.

White as a bride's veil, over lofty heads
Of mountain peaks, eternal snows are cast,
While lower glimmer, in their icy beds,
Deep, sluggish rivers, frozen but not fast,
For when the wild winds sweep those glaciers
vast

Their solemn march most dismally is sung
By howling voices of the stormy blast.
Beneath, in vales by frowning heights o'erhung,
The freeborn Switzers dwell the clouds and skies
among.

A Home of grandeur, but a Home of fear
To all but its possessors, realm of cold,
An ice-walled mansion, isolated, drear,
Yet Homeland dear to simple freemen bold,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Who laugh at fear, and will not be controlled;
In native liberty who think more blest
Their mountains than mild climes with skies of
gold.

On mountain crags the eagle builds his nest:
Bold as an eagle's heart, each mountaineer's free
breast.

He sleeps at night while avalanches pour
Down vast ravines huge, toppling fields of snow;
Earth shakes astounded at the tumult's roar
And all the din of wild destruction's flow,
Yet, if it spare the Switzer's cot below,
He sleeps in trustful, peaceful slumber there,
Nor heeds the torrent's rush and overthrow —
He sleeps content, and dreams his Home more
fair
Than loveliest island fanned by zephyr's perfumed
air.

Above the restless ocean's heaving breast
A rocky crag lifts up its wave-washed steep,
On whose rough face, like sea-bird's stormy nest,
The fisher's cottage hangs above the deep.
Here is a Home where fond affections keep
Their faithful troth; where joys and griefs are blent
In eyes that sometimes laugh, and sometimes
weep;
And hearts are nestled in as sweet content
As if, in richer Homes, more lavish lives were
spent.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The hardy fisher, toiling home at night,
 Beating to windward in his laden bark,
Sees from afar his cottage window's light
 While all the sea and stormy sky are dark;
 Fondly his eyes that tiny beacon mark,
That sends so lovingly its little ray
 O'er waves whose tossing often hides its spark,
While, on his rough cheek, midst the sea's salt
 spray,
Glistens a fresher drop he hastes to dash away.
"That light is set to guide me Home," he cries,
 "And faithful hearts are watching there to-night";
On that loved beacon strains his eager eyes
 Until their moisture dimly blinds his sight,
 And his own tears have drowned the taper's light;
Yet still his heart its kindly shine can see,
 In which e'en angry ocean's waves grow bright.
No dearer spot of earth can ever be
Than where that taper burns, faint glimmering
 o'er the sea.

Some love the ocean and its pomp of power,
 In its wide solitude delight to dwell,
Dreaming of sea-nymph in each coral bower,
 Hearing a mermaid's voice in hollow shell
 The marvels of her Home in ocean tell;
Of creatures quaint that, in sea-caves, abide;
 Her cadences breathed forth like ocean's swell.
Or the sea-dreamer, leaning o'er the side,
Fancies strange, ocean things that swim beneath
 the tide.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Amid the world's perplexities and cares
Untoward chances vex the weary heart,
Whose load of troubles anxiously that bears,
And gladly finds one spot, from doubts apart,
Where it may ease the sorrow and the smart,
And even heaviest griefs perchance beguile,
Dulling the point of fierce Misfortune's dart
By casting down its weary load awhile
To taste the solace sweet of fond affection's smile.

As when, of old, a pious pilgrim came
To holy virgin nighed in wayside shrine,
And knelt in prayer, her blessed help to claim,
So, to the household hearth, for help benign
And the o'erwearied heart's best medicine,
Comes the life-pilgrim, happy if he see
Affection there, with seraph brightness, shine,
To cheer his journey, and his light to be
On paths he travels else in dark obscurity.

How tenderly fond sympathies entwine
The Heart and Home, defying all alarms!
So, round an oak, the tendrils of a vine
Hug closely its great heart with clinging arms,
Hiding its roughness with their verdant charms
And bloom of flowers in loving ligature.
Home is a fortress that protects from harms,
A citadel where sits the heart secure,
The shrine and altar-place of all affections pure.

How in the heart, through lapse of years, abide
Fond memories, we secretly confess,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Home-recollections, time can never hide,
Nor bury into dull forgetfulness;
Nor all the duties, that around us press
In life's maturity and busiest day,
Drive from our thoughts! They still remain to
 bless,
With hallowed images of Home, our way
When backward sweeps the Past with all its long
 array.

And as the full procession passeth by
How many dear-loved shadows do we see,
Who once, with helpful hand and loving eye,
Walked with us here in life's reality!—
Shadows? Nay, what more real than memory?
The bodily shape is but a thing of sense,
While soul is life's supremest entity,
For that immortal part hath competence
Beyond the utmost reach of Death's malevolence.

As the charmed halls of recollection give
Us back again the shapes of that familiar train
Which, drawing near and nearer, seems to live
In the clear pictures of the wizard brain,
And all the treasured Past comes back again,
The heart, enchanted by the vision fair,
In memory's magic world would still remain,
Finding its Home where dearest treasures are,
Content to dream for aye so it may linger there.

For, o'er the boundary of this living day
To that Beyond, which sometime seemed so dim,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The dearest friends have passed upon their way,
Drawing our heart-strings toward life's outmost
rim;

And that far country, darksome once and grim,
But which is peopled now by cherished dead,
Sends Hope and Comfort smiling o'er its brim;
Nor whispers now of sorrow or of dread,
But messages of Home and happiness instead.

Home is a talisman to banish Woe;
Add brighter lustre to fair Fortune's light;
Softens Adversity's descending blow;
Illumes Despondency's black halls of night;
Shed on life's way a radiance fair and bright;
Drive from the heart Doubt's dusky troop of fears;
Sustain the soul in honor and in right;
Cheer all the journey through a vale of tears;
And light the torch of Hope when Death at last
appears.

Christmas

Their galleys hauled upon the shore,
Huge Norsemen, in their chieftain's hall,
Feasted while Yule-logs flashed and lit
Axes and swords upon the wall;
Half-roasted meat the tables piled
Barbaric feast for warriors wild.

Seen in that lurid, smoky light,
How brutal every Northman's face!
How vast each hero's bulky form,
From sire to son, a giant race!
Round each fierce face, that feasted there,
Hung tangles wild of flaxen hair.

They drained the mead from oaken pails;
They shouted, sang, in savage glee;
They drank to heroes and their gods
In rude, tumultuous revelry:
The timbers rough, that roofed them o'er,
Shook with their huge throats' deafening roar.

That feast, at Winter's solstice kept
By heathen of an elder day,
The Christian world has still preserved,
Though milder honors now we pay;
Of Yule, our Christmas takes the place —
We, children of that northern race.

When, nineteen hundred years ago,
In Bethlehem a babe was born,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The holy Mary with him lay
In lowly stable on that morn
When overhead shone down the star
That led the Magi from afar;

And Bethlehem's shepherds, tending flocks,
Heard a sweet choir of angels sing,
Beneath that star's benignant light,
An anthem to their new-born king;
And knelt to bless morn's dawning ray
That ushered in the Christmas day.

A sacred message, sent to tell
Of universal brotherhood,
Of purer faith, of larger life,
Of the ennobling power of Good,
Shone, like a holy diadem,
In the fair star of Bethlehem:

A Savior born to bless the world;
From fables, myths, and gods of Greece,
To free the hearts and souls of men —
A Savior and a God of Peace.
Celestial light from Heaven above
Was shining o'er the birth of Love:

O wondrous birth so long ago!
O glory of a Christmas day!
And if the world must still be blind,
With nineteen centuries passed away,
Yet ever Love, with deathless light,
Is shining through the darkest night.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Now round our fathers' hearths we meet
When Christmas comes with waning year,
Renewing those domestic ties.

Though sundered off, yet ever dear —
Brothers and sisters, children, all,
The grandsire old, the grandchild small:

Around the table happy faces
Are lighted by a sweet content;
The hearty laughter, joyous chatting,
Fill up the time with merriment;
And toasts are drunk with speech and song
While love and joy the feast prolong.

And later, when the feast is o'er,
The evening hours are bright and gay,
And music lends its witching power,
With joyous strains to crown the day,
While dancing forms flit to and fro
'Neath holly branch and mistletoe.

Dear recollections of those days
Return to us in after years
When now, perchance, we meet no more;
Nor Christmas brings its wonted cheers,
As colder comes the festal day,
Brothers and sisters far away:

Death may have thinned the joyous band,
The hearth now cold where once we met,
Scattered the children of one sire,
But those dear ties we ne'er forget:

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Round Christmas cluster memories dear,
The hallowed time of all the year:

The Christmas days of earlier life
Come back to memory with their throng
Of recollections of our youth:

Bright scenes, dear friends, to them belong—
Those halcyon days when griefs were few,
And life more sweet than then we knew.

Though smaller now the number be
Of those dear ones who greet the day,
The closer grow the ties of love
To those death spares to cheer our way;
And Hope suggests, another land
At length will reunite our band.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

A City Idyl

In an October haze the morning sun
Hung glimmering: his tawny rays of light
Had swum in fog since day had first begun;
And if he would emerge to splendor bright,
Or, in that hazy sea, extinguished quite,
Die ere the noon, seemed battling in the air;
But passers in the street, in doubt's despite,
Could not but deem that golden glimmer fair.

And Autumn's artist hand had touched the trees:
The stricken leaves bright tints had overcast;
Their painted banners shook in every breeze,
Or, stripped from branches by a ruffian blast,
Rustled and murmured as each footstep passed;
While, soft as softest clime, a breath of balm,
Spirit of gentleness, o'er all things cast
Its charm, while Nature voiced autumnal psalm.

Along the city streets, upon this morn,
The people passed; and though each breast had
care,

And labor's load was often wearily borne,
Yet many hearts were throbbing thankful there,
That Autumn showed so beautiful and fair.

A young girl comes, in whose bright eyes is
Spring;
The waning season makes her youth more rare
And lovely with its elder, sere, contrasting.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The Autumn's beauty clasps her round about;
Her artist eyes grow brighter; and the sun,
Spying her bright face, breaks an instant out,
While tinted leaves with sudden brightness burn
As they would win her glad eyes' admiration—

Why doth she stay her nimble-gliding feet?
What shadow, on her face, tells quick emotion?
Why looks she earnestly across the street?

If she be Spring, lo! Winter's self is there,
An aged crone, whose load escapes her hand;
Whose shaking limbs, bleared eyes and snowy hair
Proclaim her years have nearly touched life's strand;
While on her face is misery's woful brand —

Her basket falls; and, with a weary sigh
And sob, no longer having strength to stand,
She sits her down upon the curbing nigh.

Across the street the maiden swiftly hies,
Her heart, with soft compassion, running o'er;
A world of pity in her tearful eyes;

Kind heart and hands to help the needy poor:
With nice-gloved fingers she picks up the store

Of coals the poor old woman has let fall,
Nor stops to think her gloves are soiled therefore;
While whispering cheer, that fainting heart to
heal.

And when the aged woman, by the cheer
Of alms and kindness, passes on her way,
The maiden still assists her, with a tear
Wet on her cheek, until, with steps more steady,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The crone goes hobbling on. Now brilliantly
Bursts forth the sun out of his golden haze
As he would show his joy in holiday,
And crown the maiden with his brightest rays.

But in the midst of brightness, in her heart
There is a solemn thought that, though the day
Be bright to her, and joyous, it hath smart
Of grief to others: in its brightest ray
Both pain and sorrow come to thousands — yea,
In all these streets, which autumn's balmy air
And brilliant leaves have made so fair to-day,
Are weary hearts that find no beauty there.

Youth and Age

Through leaves and gently waving boughs
Of a huge and gnarled old tree
The slanting rays of the evening sun
Send dancing beams on me.

This giant with a hundred arms
Hath, in its heart, decay
That silently gnaws, with wasting tooth,
Its mighty strength away.

A grand old tree in its mossy age
Though its proudest days are fled,
And the winds have torn the knotty boughs;
And some are hanging dead.

Yet grandeur clothes the ancient oak,
And strangely whispers me
Of beauty that dwells not in graceful shapes,
Nor in pride of majesty:

Not strength alone is pictured here,
Though these branches long may swing
And battle with the wildest blasts,
Fierce Winter's storms can bring:

The grandeur comes of an age antique;
For the centuries, flying past,
Behold this giant sentinel
Still standing strong and fast;

PICTURES AND FANCIES

No puny life of fourscore years
The mighty oak-tree's span;
Hundreds of years have come and gone
Since here its life began.

As softly wave its myriad leaves,
By evening zephyr stirred,
Their gentle sighing seems to breathe
To me a pitying word,

That all my years should count so few,
Quick speeding to the grave,
While still the tree, as mocking me,
Above my dust may wave.

While thus I mused, a little child
Came idly playing there;
And the zephyr fanned her rosy cheeks,
And tossed her yellow hair;

Around her head, in golden rays,
I saw the sunbeams hang;
And they turned into amber her tangled curls
While she laughed and gaily sang;

And often she stopped her happy song
To prattle in her play,
And hug the kitten she held in her arms
In a quaint and motherly way.

She did not see me where I lay,
But sat beneath the tree;

PICTURES AND FANCIES

And the old, old oak cast down its shade
On the head of infancy.

"O Earth!" I cried, "O Mother Earth!
Why doth thy kindly care
Nourish for centuries the oak
And not this infant fair?

"Both are your children: why on one
Such wealth of years bestow?
And why this happy, laughing child
So soon in death lay low?

"I cannot solve this riddle, Earth,
And deem you kind and wise,
Unless the child hath other life
Than this beneath the skies!"

I dare not say that I have won
The secret of the oak:
I cannot tell why, long ago,
Its germ of life awoke;

Why, through the mould, a tiny plant,
Six hundred years ago,
Pushed its green blade in this fair vale,
A mighty tree to grow;

I dare not say that it was chance
That set the acorn here;
That chance hath sent it kindly rain
And sunshine every year;

PICTURES AND FANCIES

And when, one day, this great tree's trunk
On the green sod shall lie,
All man can know is, it hath been,
But not the reason why.

If, then, my wisdom cannot learn
The secret of a tree,
How can I think to gauge the depths
Of deeper mystery?

To know why, from this happy child
Her rippling laughter flows?
Or why, within her merry eyes
The golden sunshine glows?—

Why she will grow from infancy,
That here so sweetly plays,
To cares and sorrows that must come
In later, sadder days?

I cannot know why pain and woe
Must dim the happiness
That sparkles now in her glad eyes;
Why all her artlessness

Must turn to careful, anxious thought
As fly the years away;
Nor why her curls of amber gold
Will change to sober gray;

Nor why, a little later, she
Will cease her weary breath,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

And all of grace and comeliness
Depart at touch of death.

And when, old moss-grown tree, beneath
Your branches' trembling shade,
Under the sighing of your leaves,
Her form in earth is laid,

The sunshine, then as beautiful
As now, will deck the place;
The zephyr blow as softly then
As now it fans her face;

While you, old tree, more mossy grown,
Will still your branches wave;
Or silently drop leaves, your tears
Of grief, upon her grave;

And still beneath your lofty limbs
Will little children play;
With happy laugh and merry voice
Sing childhood's hours away.

O veteran of six hundred years!
How cometh age to you?
Doth sunshine bring the same sweet joy
As when your life was new?

Doth still your ancient heart rejoice
When sings the summer breeze,
Laden with perfume of the flowers,
And filled with hum of bees?

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Doth the loud song the robin sings
Upon your topmost bough
Wake, in your many-circled heart,
Its gay responses now?

And when, in hush of summer nights,
Your parched leaves drink the dew,
Doth the old relish of your youth
Again come back to you?

You have no human voice to tell
Your life's long history,
Yet doth your silence half unfold
Your heart of mystery:

Your grandeur hath a solemn air
Wherein no gladness dwells;
The very waving of your boughs
A tale of sadness tells;

And even when gay-hearted June
Tosses your leafy sprays
With laughing winds she wakes not mirth
As in your younger days—

But, turning from your solemn age,
I look beneath you where
The little, laughing maiden sits
With sunlight in her hair —

Sunlight that dances down to her
Your twisted boughs among —

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Sunlight that floods her happy heart
While laughs her merry tongue:

There is no sadness in the notes
From her glad lips that ring;
The piping robin stops his song
To hear this warbler sing.

O happy one, sing on! I would
Your youth might always be!
Forever in your heart abide
Your mirth of infancy!

Although you know it not, your song,
That rings so merrily,
Hath made my cold philosophy
Seem doubly cold to me:

Why should I ponder on the ways
Of life's strange mystery?
Or lose myself in deeps of thought
That stretch unendingly?

Nay, rather let me gaily sing
Beneath this murmuring tree,
And, like the sweet child, fill my heart
With happy minstrelsy!

O let me take the sunshine in,
The crimson lighted sky,
The breath of trees, the bloom of flowers,
The brook that murmurs by! —

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Take to my heart the beautiful
In childhood's simple lays,
In all the songs that Nature sings
In pleasant summer days!

O kingly-crowned Philosophy,
I beg an hour from thee:
Leave to forget thy awful truths;
To laugh with infancy! —

To banish from my wearied heart
The dazzle of thy light,
Thy splendid train, thy wondrous lore,
And all thy magic might!

Nay, darken not thy monarch brow
Into an angry frown
Because this infant's golden curls
Shine brighter than thy crown!

What though allegiance sometimes fail
Its wonted hours to thee!
Thou hast thy sceptre and the world
And an eternity!

Sing, laughing child, your merry songs
Of youth and happiness,
That they may lift my heart above
The slough of weariness;

And by their sweet and simple spells
Charm all my years away,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

That I may be a child again
To join your roundelay!

Rustle, old oak, your breezy head,
And mingle in our song!
I care not for your centuries!
I would not live so long! —

Unless Old Mother Earth, twice kind,
With gift of many days,
Will give me, too, unfading youth,
To sing her songs of praise!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Epigram

Time, stay thy wings! thy tyrant fierceness tame!
Grant me the years to win, with living breath,
A little chamber in the House of Fame!

“There waits for thee,” that ruthless tyrant saith,
His deep eyes kindling in prophetic flame,
“A little chamber in the House of Death!”

A Warden of Enchanted Land

A golden legend of delightful song
And graceful thought the poet's life hath been;
And if it chanced not fortunes strange among,
Romance cast ever its enchanting sheen
Upon his heart, reflected in his mien.
Gentle and sweet, as poet's life should be,
His days were passed with generous acts between,
And noble words outspoken worthily,
And always song with its full tide of melody.

How many hearts his noble Psalm of Life
Hath lifted from the dust and soil of earth!
Taught that life's journey, struggles, battle-strife,
Have grander prizes, and of better worth,
Than pleasure's thoughtless smile, or laugh of
mirth!

That who would climb the heights of Art to fame
Must not in idleness await the birth
Of genius; but, with kindling heart of flame
And an unceasing toil, win him a deathless name!

One of a mystic brotherhood was he,
The wizard warden of enchanted land,
Where Poesy sheds light of witchery
On many a lovely scene and marvelous band,
While Wonder, mingling beautiful and grand
With homelier types of life, fills all the place
With charming shapes of bright romance: her hand
Now pointing to Evangeline's sweet face,
Now to some dusky chief of Hiawatha's race.

A Sad May-Day

A LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF
RALPH WALDO EMERSON

May-day, alas, no more in pleasant lays
His muse shall sing of thee melodious praise!—

Of thee and the sweet Spring!

Ah, never more to sing!—

No more to weave his wisdom into verse,
And golden thoughts in golden lines rehearse!

His soul of thought and voicing lips are fled

From earth: the poet and the sage is dead.

Who will not weep for him?—

No, not for him our eyelids overflow;

'Tis for ourselves we feel this selfish woe;

For our own loss the tears our eyes bedim.

He has no loss: translated to the skies,

To larger life, his earth-freed spirit flies,

There to transcend, of space, of time, the bounds,

And all that here the imprisoned soul surrounds,

Finding that greater good than earth supplies,

That purer truth, diviner essence, given

To blossom only in pure airs of Heaven.

So hath he gone away from sorrowing

While we are left to languish in our grief;

And the new May can bring us no relief —

The new, bright May, his verse no more can sing.

Although the year was only in its Spring,

Yet was it Autumn in the poet's life;

And with ripe grain was his rich harvest rife —

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The richest harvest that a life can bring —
A harvest bountiful of admiration,
Outspoken love, not of one land, or nation,
But of all men, uprising in each heart;
Nor the mere tribute to the poet's art,
But to the truthful, high, benignant thought
That into good his every fancy wrought.
How grand the themes his spirit mused upon!
How true the pictures that his fancy traced
In no faint lines to be by time effaced
When the clear thought, that drew them, should be
gone,
As now hath sadly chanced!

Green as the May he sang shall ever be,
In grateful hearts of men, his memory —
Greener and greener still, by years enhanced.
But May, new May, O bring thy fairest flowers,
And sweetest songs of birds, to fill thy hours;
For thou hast now a harder task to cheer,
Than at the opening of a former year,
When he had voice to sing of them and thee,
And wake our hearts to Nature's harmony,
And call us to rejoicing!
Yet it was fit that he should die in spring —
When the fair flowers come forth, the gay birds sing;
When fields and trees put on their coats of green,
And brightest promises are blossoming;
For with like promises of hope and bliss
Would we go forth to that great world unseen
Whose life will crown the life and hopes of this.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Adieu to the Year

Old Year, I must not mourn for thee;
Nor can forget:
Thy shadows, with strange witchery,
Cling round me yet.

But if I have no tears, Old Year,
O'er thee to shed,
It is not that thou wast not dear
That now art dead.

For comforts, pleasures, happiness,
As fled away
Thy days, Old Year, my thankfulness
I truly pay.

And if thy hand of tyrant might,
O cruel Year,
Despoiled me of a fond delight,
A treasure dear,

Yet easier grew the biting stings
Of every harm,
As flying hours from noiseless wings
Dropped healing balm.

Although thy passing snatched away
Dear friends from me
For a brief time, thou canst not stay
My dead with thee.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Of all thy brethren, passed away,
Not one controls,
In dungeon of a buried day,
Imprisoned souls.

I will not breathe a word of blame,
Old Year, of thee;
Nor treasure up against thy name
An enmity.

While now the merry bells are ringing
In the New Year,
To his young life the welcome bringing
Around me here,

Old Year, to thee my thoughts fly back
In waking dream,
Like some fond bird on fading track
Of eve's last beam.

The Breath of the Year

Wasted and broken by December days,
Dying, the Old Year lay:
Upon his brow the fire-light's ruddy blaze
Painted a mock of health with crimson rays
By its fantastic play —

A mock of health; for his last sun
Had set,
And his last hour begun;
And what of life was lingering yet
Seemed rather a vague dream of what had been
Than a reality.
Upon his face, in deep, expressive lines, was seen
Each flash of memory
As early days came back to him —
Glad infancy,
And youth with lusty limb,
And lustier heart to do, to hope, to dare.
Before his eyes were strangely pictured there,
In changeful visionings,
Springtime's imaginings —
Fulfilled? Alas, the hopes youth brings
To the fresh heart, and the sweet songs it sings
Of happiness
Are but the flush that its own beauty flings
On life, its mystery to light and bless!

But later visions to the Old Year came,
All of life's chances as the swift months flew,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Not what he hoped, his youthful heart aflame
With high ambition's fire;
But what his days permitted him to do,
Too little of the noble, great and true
To which great hearts aspire —
Too much that sad Regret, with many anxious fears,
Still strives to wash away in her repentant tears.

Now on the Old Year's face
The struggle grew apace
As life's o'erwearied race
Drew near an end;
And fantasies
With memories
Were seen to blend.

"Where are my Hours?" he cried;
"Have they all left my side?
My golden Hours! my warrior Hours!
Lo, now I summon all my powers!
O World, you yet shall feel
The Present hath a hand of steel,
And Death, Disaster, Earthquake, Woe,
May still, upon my bidding, go!
These all, obedient, on me wait;
Nor this last hour of life too late
To launch the bolts of adverse fate,
And fairest hopes to desolate!

"But no,
I will not, like a tyrant, go;
But peacefully resign

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The sceptre, that is mine,
To him whose reign will soon begin —
Already at the gate he cries
For entrance;" and the Old Year dies
As the New Year comes in.

The Poet's Month

(These lines contain in quotation every allusion that Shakespeare has made to the month of his birth.)

When April comes, a hesitating youth,
Escaping from the stormy grasp of March,
Not only for bright summer harbingers
And mildness after winter's harsher days,
We hail the gentler month. It hath a grace,
A fair inheritance that hath come down
The busy, perilous, and changeful years,
Bringing another thought than spring to us:
It is our poet's month. On a spring day —
"A day in April never came so sweet"¹
And goodly in its golden promises
As that whereon, in England's heart, upsprung
A poet whose great words have brought full store
Of all men's blessings; made his parent land
Forever glorious — On an April day
Shakespeare, the poet of humanity,
Sweet singer and philosopher, was born —
Our Shakespeare; for his tongue, his fame, are ours;
Nor can the island of his birth fold in
His fame that overlaps the bounds of oceans,
Reaching remotest corners of the earth.
Still, for that day of old, we love thee, April;
And if thou hast been called injurious names,
We will forget them; and thou shalt not be
To us, for that one birth, a "spongy April;"²

1. Merchant of Venice, II. ix. 93.

2. Tempest, IV. i. 65.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

But ever in thy changeful skies shall shine
That ancient "glory of an April day."¹
The young year loves thee; and most maidenly
Reflects thy changefulness, all smiles and tears,
Both happy; for she has not learned the woes
The dark December of her life may bring.
"The April's in her eyes; it is Love's Spring;"²
And Love lends "spices to the April day."³
Her small, swift-bounding foot, "whose perfect white
Shows like an April daisy on the grass,"⁴
Flashes its fairness as the nymph flies on
"When proud-pied April, dressed in all his trim,"⁵
"Three April perfumes"⁶ in his waving locks,
Catches her eye, enticing her light steps
To come and dance away the joyous hours
"Twixt May and April"⁷ in gay merriment.
Bright month, thy poet loved thee, and thy freshness
Breathes pleasantness and joy in his sweet verse,
And perfume that "smells April,"⁸ lovesomeness
That cries how "men are April when they woo."⁹
So "youthful April shall,"¹⁰ by all the lovers
Of him who sang its charms, be often blessed
For his good words; and, in the years to come,
"When well-apparelled April on the heel

1. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, I. iii. 85.
2. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. ii. 43.
3. *Timon of Athens*, IV. iii. 41.
4. *Lucrece*, 395.
5. *Sonnet*, 98. 2.
6. *Sonnet*, 104. 7.
7. *Lovers' Complaint*, 102.
8. *Merry Wives of Windsor*, III. ii. 69.
9. *As You Like It*, IV. i. 147.
10. *Titus Andronicus*, III. i. 18.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Of limping Winter treads,"¹ with him will come
"Remembrance of a man in April born;"²
And to the beauty, "peering in April's front,"³
Give added grace. Nor must we blame his month,
That "fourscore of April"⁴ birthdays were not given
To cheer the world with golden years of verse;
Nor that in "April died"⁵ his heart of song —
Died? nay! his song, his soul of poesy,
His grandeur and his sweetness, have not died;
But live immortal in his deathless verse,
Victors of Time, of Death, of Accident;
Making the world more happy, noble, wise;
Stirring in every heart harmonious strings,
Divinest music of the human soul;
In which thy bard, O April! shall live on
While men recall the past, and have the gift
To feel, beyond the brutes, gay Springtime's promises,
Celestial hopes transfiguring earthly things;
While Age, with memories of full, ripe years,
"Calls back the lovely April of its prime,"⁶
Or Youth rejoices in its best delights,
"With April's first-born flowers and all things rare."⁷

1. *Romeo and Juliet*, I. ii. 27.

2. *Troilus and Cressida*, I. ii. 189.

3. *Winter's Tale*, IV. iii. 3.

4. *Winter's Tale*, IV. iii. 281.

5. *Sonnet*, 3. 10.

6. *King John*, IV. ii. 120.

7. *Sonnet*, 21. 7.

The Tower of Sonnenberg

Ruined and broken, old and gray,
Relic of by-gone feudal day,
And antique customs, passed away,
Scene of what long-forgotten lay,
Thy former glories, who shall say?
Although no ancient records may,
And legend and tradition fail,
Thy hidden past to now unveil,
Imagination tells the tale:
It kindles fires that weirdly show
How here romance, in wondrous glow,
Lighted the days of long-ago
With stranger light than now we know,
Mysterious fancy's overflow;
Making forgotten history bright
With flush of medieval light,
In which antiquity's dark night
Dawns into day before our sight,
Revealing what Time's rapid flight
Would hide beneath his centuries—
For scenes as full of mysteries
As fancy paints with fervid power
Have been thy own in former hour
When youth and passion were thy dower,
Casting their spells of witchery
And all the wonders that may be
Gathered within their glamourie
In full enchantment over thee,
Thou medieval mystery,
Gray Tower of Sonnenberg!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Thy crumbling walls, with moss o'ergrown,
Tell of romance from every stone;
Nor silent, for thy ruin lone
Rustles its ivy with a tone
Suggesting marvels all thy own:
 The maiden's sigh, the lover's tale,
 The prancing steed, the knight in mail,
The adventurous quest, the courage high,
The deeds of golden chivalry;
 Or wilder still, mad fancy brings
 A mystic wealth of wondrous things:
Giant and dragon, dwarf and gnome;
And thy old walls their ancient home;
 Or how enchantment's magic spell
 Wrought strange adventures that befell
The errant knight and wandering maid,
And here their scenes of passion laid;
 Her dungeoned knight from chains to free,
 His lady stole the magic key,
And, all the wizard's spells in vain,
Released her lover from his pain —
 What walls so strong true love to stay?
 Not thine, old tower, in strongest day! —
So did'st thou see these lovers fly
Far from enchanter's cruel eye.
 Thus, out of feudal chivalry
 And fancy's host of imagery,
Build we again thy history,
 Thou medieval mystery,
Gray Tower of Sonnenberg!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Doubtless thy walls, so still to-day,
So lovely in the sun's last ray,
Whose charm transforms from gray to gay,
 Have rung with clash and clang of fight
 As storming war-men climbed thy height,
And arrows sang beneath the skies
That now the golden sunset dyes,
And captives wailed, with bitter cries,
Beneath their victors' cruel eyes,
 While hoarse, wild shouts of victory
 Drowned dying groans of misery;
As oft hath chanced in ancient day
Of medieval time; and may
 Still chance while war's unpitying rage
 Survives all change from age to age,
 And man its cruelty will wage;
 Nor modern time can yet assuage
Its woes, though much enlarged the skill
To fashion all the arms that kill
 From the rude art of that old day
 When feudal lord here held his sway,
Careless alike of right or wrong
While thy old walls were new and strong.
 Thy wars are over many a year,
 And thou art sunk in slumber here;
From century to century
Sleeping while Time broods over thee,
What dreams must haunt thy memory,
Thou medieval mystery,
 Gray Tower of Sonnenberg!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The Mountain Brook

Along the mountain-side my path,
In many curving lines,
Wound in and out; above me towered
The silence of the pines.

But soon, precipitous, a crag
Rose steeply over all;
More thinly here the trees and shrubs
Clung to the mossy wall.

A narrow ledge, with here and there
Steps rudely shaped, the way,
Through wild but charming solitude,
Most picturesquely lay.

Above, the sky was flecked with clouds
Upon its deepest blue,
Contrasting with the green of leaves
When seen their verdure through.

Or far away along the heights,
Against the azure sky,
The fairy tracery of the trees,
Through vistas, caught my eye.

And soon I came where narrow grew
The gorge, high walls between,
Where shadows filled, with twilight dim,
The deep and dark ravine.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Below, a noisy streamlet ran,
And, while I passed, its roar
Grew louder as it chafed and dashed
Against its rocky shore.

The walls were tapestried with moss,
And here, in wild display,
A tangle dense of birch and beech
O'erhung the narrow way.

Above the wildly rushing stream
A wooden foot-bridge hung,
Its rail oft wet with flying spray
In tiny jets upflung.

Down their rough bed the waters leaped,
And sang with blithesome glee;
Their tinkling voices sweetly joined
In sylvan melody.

This dashing, splashing mountain brook,
Whose cold spray wet my face,
From lofty steeps above had come
In swift and dizzy race;

Beneath the rustic bridge it roared,
And scampered merrily;
With mimic wrath it leaped aloft,
And shouted cheerily.

I looked above, where, through the trees,
I spied its foaming track

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Far upward till its flash was lost
Among the pine-trees black.

The little torrent loudly sang,
And, in its merry play,
Seemed shouting all the wondrous things
It found along the way.

Then, while I listened, its wild din
Cast a strange charm on me:
Far up the mountain heights I climbed
In fancy, dizzily —

Far up where Alpine roses bloom,
To please no mortal eye,
Where the wild chamois lightly leaps
To pastures 'mid the sky —

Far up, beyond the woods of pine,
To steeper heights where grow
The blossoms of the edelweiss,
White as the mountain snow —

Far up where, dim, the glacier gleams
Adown the mountain's brow —
Far up where, round the topmost peak,
The clouds are gathering now.

And while I mused, the babbling tongues
Beneath me seemed to tell,
In shout and murmur, of the things
That, on their path, befell:

PICTURES AND FANCIES

It was a gossip strange and weird
With noisy chatterings
Of rocks and snow and trees and flowers,
Even fantastic things:

How a vast stretch of "Stony Sea,"
Whereon no verdure grows,
Is sometimes lit with gleaming fires
When the red sunset glows;

How a great cavern lurks below
This rock-sea's mighty range,
Where dwelt of old a dragon brood
Of mythic monsters strange;

How, in majestic pride, great peaks
Point grandly to the sky,
Tearing the banners of the clouds
When tempests o'er them fly.

But, ah, how lone those upland steeps!
How silent, cold, and dread!
Sleeping amid the spectral clouds
The slumber of the dead!

Though grandeur clothes the mountain peaks
With kingliness of might,
And beauty gilds them with bright beams
Of all-enchanting light,

Yet loud the laughing voices cried:
"We would not be so great;

PICTURES AND FANCIES

"These woodland dells, these blooming flowers,
Are dearer than such state!

"And though the pines seem proud and grim,
Yet, when soft breezes blow,
They whisper things one would not guess,
Seeing how prim they grow;

"And once, when winds tore madly down
The stricken mountain side,
They bent to us their stately heads,
Forgetful of their pride.

"Though rough our path, our babblings wild
Have not a touch of fear
Since we have left the lofty heights,
And come to gossip here.

"Grandeur and pride are throned above,
And there we let them be;
Content in these sweet woodland vales
To prattle merrily."

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The King of the Lake

A LEGEND OF KOENIG'S SEE IN THE BAVARIAN HIGHLANDS

As we skim o'er the lake see how grandly on high
The great crags, bare or pine-clad, reach up to the sky;
Rugged forms of grim giants the steep mountains take,
Whose weird shadows are creeping, like ghosts, o'er
the lake.

They would awe us with wonder, and chill us with
fright,
But, above them, we see fairy spirits of light
Where a fleet of white clouds has been caught by their
crests
Till a silvery veil on the mountain tops rests.

And the sunshine is bright on those isles of the air,
While each crag's rocky harshness grows smiling and
fair;
E'en the pines, that far up on the precipice grow,
Into beauty are brought in the mirror below.

Our gay Tyrolese boatman stands up at his oar;
But his daughter, low-seated, propelleth us more;
Though he labor but little, he talketh alway
Of the wonder and beauty of his Koenig's See.

Now he ceaseth from rowing, the echoes to wake,
And the sound of his shot crasheth over the lake,
To be quickly caught up and roared down from the
sky,
While from peak unto peak the loud thunderings fly,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

As if voices of giants outspoke from the cloud,
And the din of their speaking were shouted aloud:
"O awaken, my brothers! what watch do you keep?"
"Nay; awake us not thus from the silence of sleep!

"We were dreaming remembrance of days when the
earth
In her youth, with sharp pangs, to the mountains gave
birth;
When her breast was upheaved by an Infinite Power,
Nature torn into wreck in that primitive hour.

"But, alas, what long ages have lingered away
Since the tumult and throb of that terrible day!
How have centuries come! how have centuries past,
Until nothing but slumber is left us at last!"

Midst the shouting of giants, one spirit of dread
The loud chorus of voices out-thundered, and said:
"I am king of these mountains; the answer I make
To each summons that climbs my steep sides from the
lake.

"They have called me the Watzmann in this later
time,
But their elders, beholding my summit sublime,
How, aloft o'er the lake, rise my pinnacles high,
Named me Koenig, and deemed that a monarch was I.

"But the snow on my head is too icily cold,
And the heart in my bosom too withered and old;
For the young there is kingship: remember I may,
The bright glory of youth in my earlier day.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

"But remembrance comes only in slumber and dream;
Although bright on my head the warm sunshine may
beam,
It can cheer me no more; nor may melt with its rays
The white robe that enfolds me and chills me always.

"So when fitfully wakened strange voices of sleep
In my thunder resound, and roll down o'er the deep,
They disturb not my slumbers that coldly await,
Through the eons of ages, the edicts of fate.

"Mother Earth, art thou aged, or still in thy prime? —
Or perchance 'tis a fable, this legend of Time! —
I have felt thy great bosom beneath me upheave:
Thou art older and colder, I surely believe.

"Now, my brothers, I sink into slumber profound;
If still thunder my voice, it is only a sound —
Come, ye dreams of the glory of Eld, and enfold me,
That, so dreaming, the Earth's youthful splendor shall
hold me!"

Still I mused in much wonder at voices so old,
And the tale of the mountains those echoes had told,
Till the Tyrolese boatman, with splash of his oar,
From my dream roused me up to the present once
more.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Masks

Though I think that I know my next neighbor full well,
And his face and his voice and his thoughts I can tell;
Yet perchance he has borne, all the years, past my face
A strange drama of which I have caught not a trace.

All the world goes uncaring, unheeding, indeed,
Though misfortune's sharp spear maketh sad bosoms
 bleed;
And a Hamlet, unknown, carries round in his breast
A wild drama, close-hidden and never confessed.

We may think that too quiet and dull is his mind,
The hot rage of emotion and passion to find;
So he plods on before us, but hides from our view
The same tragedy pains that Prometheus knew.

The Greek actors wore masks lest their art should
 show trace,
On a picture of beauty, of life's commonplace;
But we cover, with commonplace, passion and pride,
While the masks that we wear, life's mad dramas oft
 hide.

But we think not of beauty; we think not of art;
Closely holding the mask while we play out the part;
All our masking and playing we hide with a smile,
But the drama goes on to the death all the while.

The bright glare of the footlights, the stage's trained art,
Seek in vain to enhance the wild rage of the heart:

PICTURES AND FANCIES

They belittle the passions, burlesquing the strife
That oft tortures a soul in a drama of life.

Every life is a drama of feeling or doing;
Unseen are the demons forever pursuing,
While we listen to babble, and deem that no fear
Can be lurking beneath the loud laugh that we hear.

Hidden deep under life's common customs and shows
The great river of feeling, in swift eddies, flows;
And our acts are most often but froth on the wave,
While beneath runs the current, to lose or to save.

In the Bavarian Tyrol

A lovely land of uplands high!
A cloudland oft in summer sky;
But when the sun shines out, its light
Makes these great mountains richly bright,
And this Bavarian Tyrol seem
The shining landscape of a dream,
Too picturesquely fair to be
A waking hour's reality!
Majestic in the pure, bright air
Rise Alpine peaks sublimely fair;
While, clothed in tints of varying green,
Fair valleys stretch the heights between,
Or lose all tints in deep ravine
That cleaves the mountain-side, as though
A giant's sword had dealt the blow.
A silent host of dusky firs
Climbs roughly up the mountain spurs;
A clearness in this upper air
Makes all the hues of distance fair;
And wondrous tints of blue appear
Through magic charm of atmosphere.

On foothills dark the pines are green;
Above, the snow-clad crests are seen
Catching the clouds, while soft below,
O'er mountain slopes their shadows go;
Or gathering hosts of darkening cloud
Mountains and valleys dimly shroud;

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Or blackening into tempest dread
Demons of storm fight overhead.
But when the rage of wind and rain
Is o'er, the sun bursts forth again,
Building, in vivid tints hung low
On far off crags, a brilliant bow
Whose double arch of lustrous glow
Soon dies upon the mountain snow.
Again serene, the peaks on high
Catch the fair sunlight; gleaming sky
And snow and crags and pine-trees green
Are blended in enchanting scene.

Those lofty peaks, on which the rack
Of angry storm was late so black,
Seem now a palace builded high
For Summer gods in fairy sky,
A bright Valhalla, gleaming there
Sun-tinted, most divinely fair;
Whose mythic dwellers must belong
To fable-world of tale and song,
The glorious ones of storied Eld
When Time was young that Earth once held —
Celestial maids, heroic men,
That Earth can never breed again;
Seen only now in pictured show
When high imaginations glow,
Or printed page or canvas bright
Brings back the myths of Eld to sight —
But this is Art's enchantment; now
'Tis Nature paints the mountain's brow

PICTURES AND FANCIES

With beauty so divinely grand
We see the touch of God's great hand.

Now half a god's serenity,
Above the world, has come to me:
Passion and trouble rage below,
But I am high above their flow —
High up on Obersalzberg's side,
Resting content whate'er betide
In valleys where the stir of life
Goes on with toil and petty strife.
So once they deemed that Zeus, the high,
Looked downward from Olympian sky,
With a divine serenity,
Upon man's ant-hill, busily
Struggling with passions, strife, hopes, toil,
Unrest in life's so strange turmoil.

Sweet Peace upon the mountains rests,
And crowns with beauty their great crests —
A beauty so serenely bright,
It fills the heart with pure delight;
While messages divinely fly
From mountain peaks along the sky
To every watching human eye,
Telling mysteriously of lore
Above the reach our thoughts may soar,
Supreme, divine intelligence
Beyond the narrow range of sense —
Of wonderful, unwritten things
This beauty of the mountains sings.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The Enchanter

Shakespeare! his name
Rings in our ears through centuries of fame;
Or softly steals
Into the heart like charming melody,
Blending with all it feels
By the sweet influence of poetry;
Calling on joy to cheer us merrily,
Or loftier thoughts to yield philosophy,
Or bright imagination to unfold
Gay wings of burnished gold,
And bear us through his fairy realms of poesy.

Shakespeare! his wand
Is an enchanter's in its witchery:
Its high command
Controls us with delightful mastery:
Care is forgot;
Dullness is not;
We, too, are kings, and share his potency;
Poets and singers we, charmed by his wizardry.
No spell he flings,
No song he sings,
But he has made it ours by his sweet sorcery.
We look within
Each heart his magic has laid bare,
And find our kinship there:
His "touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Shakespeare!
How brave a band
Of mighty and of lovely ones appear
Out of his magic verse, and throng on every hand —
Fair forms of grace, bright figures of command!
When, by his sway,
Open the gates that wondrous scenes display,
What countless shapes, in marvelous array,
Enchant the hour
That yields us to the great magician's power!

Shakespeare, forever young!
His verses on each tongue
Have ever charm to win fresh blossoms of the spring
From youthful hearts that feel their quick awakening;
And even sober age,
Inspired by his page,
Grows young again and sings its youthful songs,
And feels the joy that unto youth belongs,
Finding that myth a truth,
Fountain of deathless youth,
In inspirations, that divinely start
To ecstasy
In every human heart
When touched by his enchanting wand of poesy.

Memories

The young have never time to know
 Their happiness:
As bees disport from flower to flower,
Tasting of sweetness every hour
 In mad excess,
So giddily their rounds they go
Until some harsh and pitiless season drives
Them — as the honey-seekers to their hives —
 To memories
Of sweet, or sour, wherewith they store their lives
 For later days.

In youth's wild fever, joy and pain
Are mingled in hot heart and brain;
 But age is free
To live its pleasures o'er again,
Recalling joys, forgetting pain,
 In memory.

A Norse Love-Song

I lay at night 'neath the pine-trees' shade,
And heard their sighs as the wind swept past;
I loved the sound that their branches made,
The song they sang in the wind's wild blast —

I heard the yelp of the straining pack
When first to view came the hunted game;
Gaily I echoed the glad sounds back,
And my hunter heart was all aflame —

I stood by the sacred Druid stone,
And heard the chant with its grand refrain
While I felt a power beyond my own
Sweep over my soul in its mystic strain —

When warriors sat round the galley's rim
Our long oars dipped in the flashing sea
While we sang of Freya, her battle hymn,
Our souls inspired by its melody.

Last night we wandered from all apart
On the great, gray ocean's marge of sand,
Where I asked the gift of her maiden heart,
And clasped in my own her trembling hand;

The sweetest sound that was ever heard
Was the whispered word she spoke to me;
And my own rough heart was as madly stirred
By that soft word as man's heart can be.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

O tell me not of the songs they sing
In Odin's palace above the skies!
Valhalla, thy halls may loudly ring
With the songs of the Vikings that round me rise;

They never can drown the low, sweet tone
Of her voice, last night, on the ocean shore;
Her word will live in my heart alone
When Odin's palace shall be no more.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Daphne and Calidon

DAPHNE [*alone*]

O Calidon, my only one!
Why doth my true love tarry?

CALIDON [*coming*]

For gold I've been, a ring to win,
That thou and I may marry.

DAPHNE

How could'st thou stay so long away,
My shepherd swain, my Calidon?

CALIDON

I've been to bring a wedding ring,
To put thy charming finger on.

DAPHNE [*taking ring*]

A wedding ring, the lovely thing!
How gott'st thou this, my Calidon?

CALIDON

I cut the locks from off my flocks,
And took the wool to Carleon.

DAPHNE

What! cut the locks from gentle flocks!
Alas, poor things, I know they'll freeze!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

CALIDON

But thou, with me, wilt happy be
In a warm cot among the trees.

DAPHNE

O Calidon, thou cruel one!
Thy heart is very hard, I see.

CALIDON

O Daphne dear, thou 'rt talking queer:
My heart is never hard to thee.

DAPHNE [*crying*]

The little dears, sheared to their ears;
I know that they most cold will be!

CALIDON

'Tis fools would keep wool on their sheep;
Thou art silly so to scold at me.

DAPHNE

I am cross and mad; it is too bad
To be such cause of misery.

CALIDON

I pray thee, nay; put far away
That frowning look from thy dear eye.

DAPHNE

If silly, Sir, I still prefer
To stand aloof from cruelty.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

CALIDON

O innocent! what harm is meant?
Thy senses, dear, have surely fled.

DAPHNE [*giving back the ring*]

Sir Cruelty, keep not for me
Your ring — some other maid go wed.

CALIDON

O Daphne, stay! go not away;
Nor treat thy swain so cruelly!

DAPHNE

Until your flocks have grown new locks
And fleeces full, speak not to me.

CALIDON

Daphne!—she's gone! If in her scorn
She were less fair, then it might be,
Her word I'd take, another make
My bride; and from her chains be free.

DAPHNE [*returning*]

O Calidon, forsaken one,
What wilt thou do if I relent?

CALIDON

Whate'er thy will, so love me still,
And life with thee be sweetly spent.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

DAPHNE

Fitting for me, to fickle be;
But, shepherd, be thou always kind.

CALIDON

Share thou my cot, my happy lot
No ills of life will ever mind.

DAPHNE [*thoughtfully*]

I'll sew some stuff for them, enough
To keep the sheep from freezing wind.

CALIDON

Thou'rt sweet as fair, and none may dare
To say thy heart is e'er unkind.

DAPHNE

Well! where 's the ring? O lovely thing!
Shepherd, we will be wed tomorrow.

CALIDON

My heart is gay; I haste away,
A priest and cot to beg, or borrow.

DAPHNE [*alone*]

If he should know I love him so,
I could not make him humor me:
So our weak sex must often vex
Our shepherd lads, or servants be.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The Mountain

In mad career
Are dancing here
The spirits of the water:
Quaint shapes appear, to laugh and jeer,
As down the bright drops patter.
In hollow way
Beneath the clay
Their tinkling feet have run,
To greet the day with frolic play,
Upleaping to the sun.

These elves have fled
Their native bed,
And here most cunningly
They have been led, with fairy tread
To caper airily.
Hark, how they cry,
As forth they fly,
And shout their glad huzzas:
"This stairway high, to mount the sky,
Will toss us to the stars!"

As pure and white
The waters bright
In crystal streams outpour,
Their sparkles write, in words of light,
This legend evermore:

PICTURES AND FANCIES

“Who stops to drink
Upon the brink
Of our o’erflowing brim
Need never think his lips should shrink
From what we pour for him:

“No poison foul
Is in our bowl
To madden heart and brain;
No wicked bane to give him pain,
Or noble manhood stain.
Fly from the charms
And baleful harms,
Round madding cups that cling,
To soothing calms and healing balms
That our pure waters bring!”

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Unseen Attendants

A swan swims on the bright, unruffled stream;
Below, I see his double softly gleam;
Invisible to the white swimmer's eyes
The snowy phantom that beneath him lies:
And so, methought, our eyes may never see
Angelic shapes, perchance our company.



SONNETS

A Sonnet is a Jewel

A sonnet is a jewel that should shine
 With lustre like a diamond; its light,
 Refracted by each facet, gleaming bright
From a clear central fire; its every line
Wrought by the poet's art in fashion fine;
 But if he shape its brilliance not aright,
 Although the gem be precious, ruined quite
Is all its beauty and its fair design.

Whether it hath the diamond's purity,
 The ruby's depth of passion, or express
Hope like the emerald, it yet must glow
With poet inspiration, and must be
 A thing of beauty, truth, or daintiness,
Fashioned by art, its preciousness to show.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Alfred Tennyson

His artist hand unlocks the silver gates
Of song; and happy syllables, set free,
Leap gaily forth in lightsome liberty;
Yet each, submissive to the master, waits
To bear the thought his poesy creates.
Nor like Pandora's imps these puppets be,
But move in marshaled lines of minstrelsy,
Each in true measure with harmonious mates.

Sometimes they laugh like mountain brooks at play;
Or sing enchanting strains of melody;
Or through dark forest paths with Enid stray;
Or dance, like fairies, round an elfin ring;
Or chant deep anthems as the pine-tops swing;
Or sigh, with lone Cēnone, life away.

The Dead Lion

"Only a player! and his ancestry
Derived from yeoman sires! From such a line
How could there spring an intellect divine?
Shakespeare? O, no: no mighty soul was he!
In Bacon, Raleigh, the true Shakespeares see.
Can the celestial light of genius shine
On low-born lives? Would Heaven, with large
design,
God-like endow one of the yeomanry?"

Thus chatter they who, to divinity
Of genius, would construct a brazen key,
Or figure poesy up like paltry sum.
So, when a lion dies, base jackals come
To rend the kingly, and make hideous night
With dismal howling o'er his fallen might.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Hamlet

Beneath thy inky cloak what mystery,
Hidden yet half revealed, would cheat our eyes?
What brooding thought in thy sad bosom lies,
To stain young life with deep-dyed melancholy?
Haunting thy side stalks grim-eyed Tragedy,
While superstitious terrors darkly rise—
Wringing our hearts with painful sympathies—
And push thee to thy fatal destiny.
Thou canst not hide the struggle in thy breast:
Like doomed Laocoön's, within the folds
Of deadly serpents, must thy anguish be;
In vain thy mystery; for nature holds
Such enmity to Madness, 'tis confessed
The mocking monster that doth torture thee.

Imogen

A gentle Briton! Not the distant age,
Nor all the myths and marvels of that time
Through which the master makes her fortunes
climb,
A royal princess and a strolling page,
Can keep her from our hearts. Her woes engage;
Her innocence, amid a snare of crime,
Shines, like her constancy, with light sublime,
Filling Belarius' cave, her harborage,
With such unsullied brightness that it seems
No longer far away, nor mythical.
Like pure affection in the tender eyes
Of those who love, her soul upon us beams,
Winning for Imogen the hearts of all,
Filling our souls with loving sympathies.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Bend Sinners

Clear type of gentle, trustful womanhood!
All woman in that spirit which still finds
In some great heart, though rude, the tie that
binds
Enduringly her own. Not for her good,
But his, her spirit moves; its every mood
Is tempered unto his. Her eye it blinds
To acts that cry out to the very winds
His faults, by her alone misunderstood.

She thinks of naught but her idolatry,
Setting its cross up in her faithful life,
And kneeling there, with fervent prayer and
thought,
Excuses coldness, harshness, cruelty.
At length, like Hindoo, this too faithful wife
Is crushed beneath her car of Juggernaut.

A Vision of Night

In sleep a regal vision came to me,
 Queenly in majesty: my dreaming sight
 Beheld, in her dark, trailing garments, Night
Sparkling with gleaming stars, whose brilliancy
Studded her sable robes like jewelry.
 Beneath her feet the crescent moon's pale light
 Made all her goddess presence softly bright.
Upon my slumber came all dreamily
 Her voice like low-toned music: "I bring sleep
 To soothe the world aweary of bright Day,
My sun-crowned, splendid brother. His domain
Is Earth's great host of energies. I keep
 My vigil o'er its rest; and my soft sway
Restores the vital strength he wastes again."

Church Bells

Heard on the mountain above Lake Maggiore

Softly I hear, through pure, bright morning air,
The chime of Sabbath bells; all else is still:
From many belfrys rise sweet sounds until
Clear music floats o'er all the mountain fair,
Lulling harsh memories of cark and care.
Religion haunts the air with strains that fill
My heart with such devotion that my will,
Amid this Sabbath sweetness, may not dare
To be a heretic. The sweet-toned bells
Make me a convert, not to priest, nor creed,
Nor church, nor altar; but to faith divine
In pure religion; and their music tells
How Goodness reigns o'er every thought and
deed,
Filling the heart with healing grace benign.

**At the Monastery Church of the Madonna del
Sasso**

At Locarno

In peaceful loveliness, like a fair dream,
 Silence and beauty here around me lie:
 The azure lake, the turquoise-tinted sky,
The snow-topped mountains splendid in the beam
Of the low sun, and, on the lake, its gleam
 In flashing brightness. Such a sympathy
 Hath mind with nature, that it seemed to me
A cloistered brother I could be, and deem
 My life most happy, passed in scene like this;
 But, while I mused, a brown-robed monk
 appeared,
In whose bowed face was no tranquillity,
 But sharp anxiety instead of bliss;
 At which my former fancy now I feared,
That nature's smile must bring its peace to me.

The Afterglow

At Locarno

Deep like a basin, in encircling rim
Of mountain heights, this Alpine village lies.
The glassy lake reflects from cloudless skies
Their brilliant tints. Behind the western brim
Sinks down the sun, and purple shadows dim
The rocky slopes; but when the sunlight dies,
A sudden glory, with strange glimmer, flies
Along the east, where ruddy splendors limn
The mountains till they burn with fairy light,
Red, red as embers, beautiful and bright.
In such bright splendor may our virtues show
At sunset hour of life's activity!
How beautiful the rosy tints will be
Of every good deed's heaven-lit afterglow!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Flowers

"I see no use in them," quoth Peter Bell,
"These wild flowers of the woods; they bloom
and die

In secret nooks where not a human eye
Looks on their blossoming. It were as well
A constant blight their opening buds befell."

He knows their use whose heart of sympathy
Throbs in response to nature's poesy;
Who hears sweet song-tones ring their rhythmic
swell

Of music in the flowers. Though no eye view
Its beauty, who can say the blooming vale
Is purposeless? the blossom-painted sod

Without a use? Their tints of charming hue
May sing to angels, as to men, a tale,
In mystic verse, of harmonies of God.

Faithful Friends

What though I hear upon my window pane
The dreary dashing of December rain;
And all beyond my little, bright domain
Be black and cheerless! Darkness threats in vain;
For here are friends whose counsel and whose store,
In lavish wealth, are freely given to me;
Nor do they frown although I ask for more,
Unsatisfied with prodigality.

My books are friends and servants always true:
Though cold the world, their kindly pages glow
With cordial cheer, while Fancy's genial crew
Leap from the lines, dull thoughts to overthrow.
And if I love some favored one the best,
No pangs of jealousy disturb the rest.

De Luxe

Thirty-five copies, paper Japanese,
The etchings, proofs—You ask me how they're
better
Than copies for the million where each letter,
Page, title, print, is set the same as these—
They're better if their choiceness better please.
Do you love Art? She makes you here her
debtor;
You cannot be, of beauty, a forgetter;
Then drop devoutly down upon your knees,
And worship with true bibliomaniac zeal
This typographic idol. Dear, indeed,
Are limited editions, numbered books;
But count not cost when Beauty bids you kneel,
And, for her dainty pleasures, warmly plead—
At least, you must not when she's a De Luxe.

The Faun

"Aye-ho! aye-ho!" the sylvan faun outcried;
 "How fresh the breeze! how sweet the joyous
 day!
How fair the world in blooming, fragrant May!
Come, brother brutes—I will not be denied—
Lie down with me, this laughing brook beside,
 And I will pipe you measures blithely gay
 And sweet as nightingale's most lovesome lay!
O trees and shrubs and flowers, one kindred wide
Is ours! of Nature's motherhood are we,
 Her happy children! All my heart cries out
The joyful brotherhood that it would tell.
List to my pipe! its jovial song shall be
 The loves that nature's buxom voices shout—
Join, dear companions; let our chorus swell!"

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Monologue

Fair Moon, hast thou the power—as thou dost
seem—

To fill thy face with silent sympathy?

To hold, from thy lone orb of mystery,

Commune with human hearts? Thy silver beam

Hath shed weird charm, in its beguiling gleam,

To many eyes uplifted unto thee

For help, or hope, amidst perplexity,

To read, in thy fair face, life's troubled dream.

Or dost thou, pallid witch, inspire the soul

With fancies as uncertain as thy light,

Making men mad with hopes, ambitions vain;

Alluring onward to some shining goal

Too soon obscured in disappointing night;

Quenching all hopes in unextinguishable pain?

The Old Schloss

Its broken walls are gilded by each ray
Of sunset; and this lovely evening hour
Makes beautiful the ruined arch and tower
Where ivy mantles over long decay.
Our thoughts are borne far backward to the day
When these great battlements were walls of
power,
And not, as now, a medieval dower
Of beauty from the Past. This ruin gray,
High on the mountain top, then ruled the land;
And its fierce robber lord looked widely down
On the low country subject to his sway,
Sending abroad his predatory band
To levy tribute in each pass and town —
A thing of dread, not beauty, in that day.

Carthage

And this was Carthage! Bare the hill-sides lie
As though no mighty Past were buried here.
I close my eyes: lo, suddenly appear
The olden shapes of Punic history!
Towers, palaces, and temples pierce the sky;
I see great fleets of ships: afar and near
The bay is white with sails. And whither
steer
These ships? — To conquer Rome. — The phantoms
fly:
Gone are the hosts that sailed with Hannibal;
Gone the majestic city—all are gone.
My vision was a dream, a memory
Of Carthage in her ancient glory. All
That now I see is meagre, sad, forlorn,
Save lovely tints in azure sky and sea.

Broken Wings

What vague ambitions haunt the mind of youth!
Life's possibilities—how vast they seem!
What splendid figures on hope's canvas gleam,
Wondrous, though unsubstantial, forms of truth,
Never, alas, to be the prize in sooth
Of life's long labors! Truth? is truth a dream?
Are fair ideals, that so brightly beam
In expectation, all in vain? No ruth
Hath destiny; and life is pitiless:
Its daily needs and duties push aside,
With tedious details, all its grandest things;
Greatness and splendor lost in littleness;
Our dreams are naught, while petty things
abide;
And genius falls to earth with broken wings.

My Wife's a Butterfly

Beauty was wedded once to soberness:
 She was a butterfly with gilded wings;
 He was a moth, one of those quiet things
Content to live unnoted. One may guess
How he admired when in her sun-bright dress
 His wife flew by, the joy that Summer brings
And all the season's blithesome whisperings
About her wings; and his fond heart would bless
 Her happy fortune—and his own, to be
Allied to such a lovely elf as she.
“What though all other prizes pass me by!”
 Quoth he, the happy moth, “Enough for me,
 Mine is this bright-hued queen of brilliancy;
Though I'm a moth, my wife's a butterfly!”

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Midnight

The bells ring midnight clearly on my ear,
But not in unison. As, one by one,
Their clamors die away till all are done,
Still in my heart their dying tones I hear,
While the great rush of Time seems now more
near,
And its swift course more solemnly to run
Under the darkness than beneath the sun
And daylight's active, honest-hearted cheer.

Now with myself may I commune apart
From all the sleeping world: and thought, set
free
From noisy contact with the busy day,
May probe the deep recesses of my heart,
While brain and feeling undisturbedly
Their mystic, interacting powers display.

Fascination

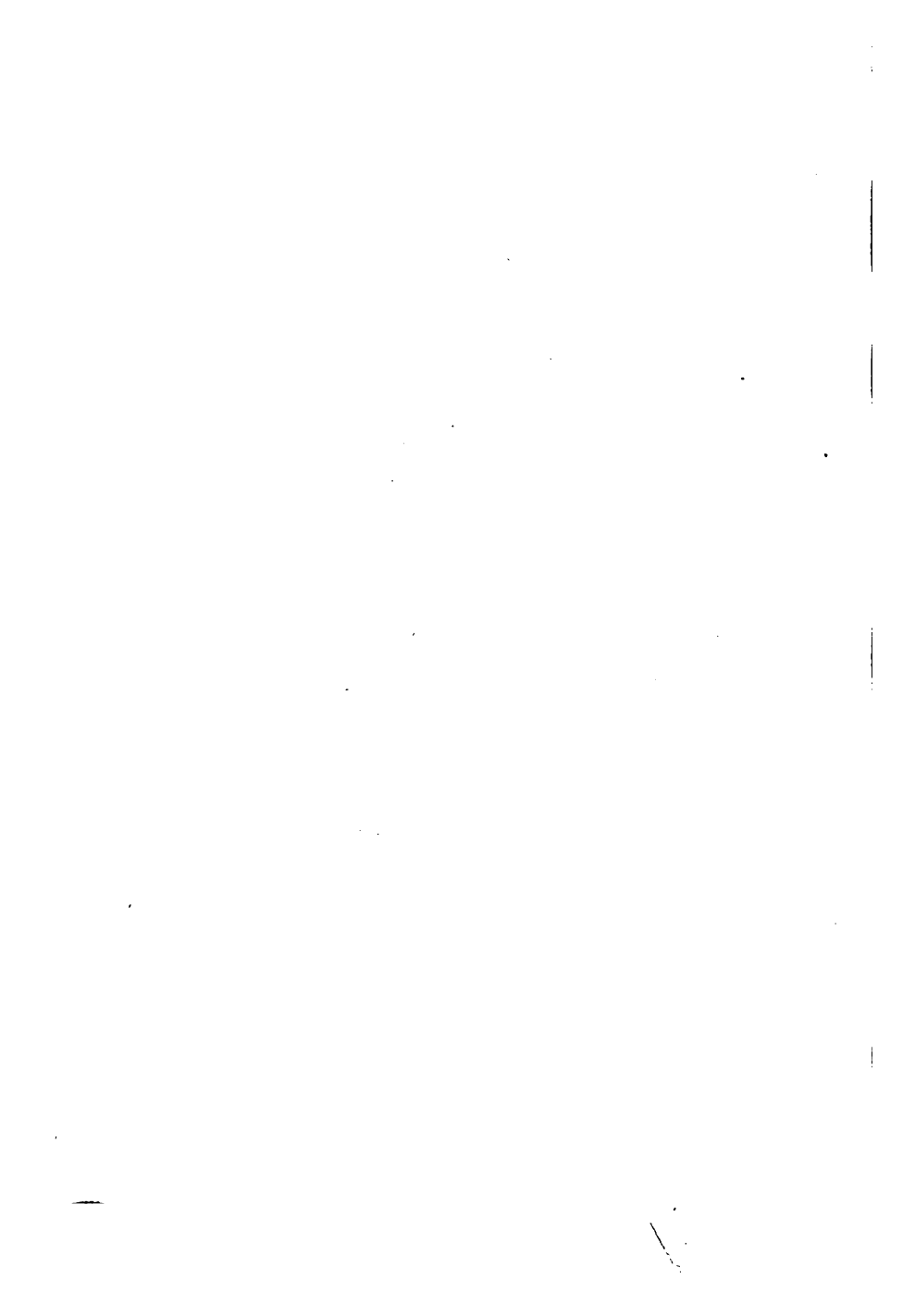
Marvelous inspirations in her face,
Pure lines of form, bright eyes, bewitching
hair—
And these and sweetness make her wondrous
fair.
Why should it trouble me? Why should her grace
Drive from my mind all other thought? erase
Other impressions from my brain? plant
there
The sting of restlessness? Why should I care?
Her spirit haunts me from yon golden vase,
From views of mountain, vale, and sunlit sea,
From all the forms of things that meet my eye—
Her mocking, haunting spirit in them all.
Her fascination is a mystery
That, when I seek from its sweet charm to fly,
Compels me still her presence to recall.

My Valentine

Dear thoughts of thee, O lady mine!
Come every day; but for the shrine
Of the old saint, to love benign,
New garlands, with the old, I twine.
If I evoke not now the nine
To sing of thee, 'tis that no line—
No stanzas—can thy charms define.
May thy glad life no joy resign;
With every year new grace be thine,
Pleasures and hopes; and all combine
To bless with good thy way; no sign
Of ill make dim the light divine
That ever in thy face doth shine,
Thy fairest charm, my Valentine!

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PICTURES AND FANCIES

A Quiet Village

A quiet village, yet its tranquil rest
Full of rich memories! They come to me
With childhood's pictures: and each memory
A living thing in youth's fresh colors drest.
But not for me, alone, the interest
That fills this rural town with history:
What visions here may every dreamer see!
What soul-inspiring memories invest
This village with the spirit of the Past!
They trod these streets of old, whose living
words
Are speaking still, to many a heart and brain,
Their varied messages. Their phantoms cast
Broad figures on the Present. With their
swords,
Deeds, pens, and words they labored for our gain.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Pilgrim Settlers

Hither, believing freedom highest good,
Came pilgrims, by sore persecution tried,
Who would not worship what their souls
denied,
Nor palter truth. Amid the pathless wood
They felled the trees that by the river stood,
And built a blockhouse which doth still abide
Through all the years and changes that betide
More than two centuries' rude hardihood.
After the town was built in those old days
When Peter Bulkley led his people here,
He taught, with prayer and praise of God, that band
Of exiles calm contentment in the ways
Of Puritan simplicity so dear
To those stern pilgrim-fathers of our land.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The Minute Man

Upon the river bank a statue stands
That tells how war began in former days;
How promptly freemen freedom's arms upraise,
Quitting the plow at honor's quick commands
To free their country from marauding bands.
This graceful statue is a people's praise;
Meeting each later patriot's fond gaze,
It arms anew, for liberty, his hands.
The place is full of rich remembrances
Of men and deeds of a heroic age;
Out of that older day this Minute-man
Leaps on his granite block. Our liberties
Are safe in his strong hands. Our heritage
Of freedom is his wise, far-seeing plan.

Daniel C. French

And he who made the statue whose true art
Adorns a lovely spot with history,
Pictured in this effective effigy,
A townsman here. Perhaps no little part
Of quickening spirit in his artist heart
Came to him in the stirring memory
Of oft-told deeds of patriotic glory:
For who can tell what impulses may start
The fire of genius in the soul of man!
Or who can tell from whence divinely spring
Conceptive thought's and form's awakenings!
Out of some memory each thought began,
Each form arose; for recollections bring
Shapes of creative art's sublimest things.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Ralph Waldo Emerson

How dull were he who, past the boundaries
Of sight and touch, ne'er dared project his
thought;
Nor unseen reasons for life's problems sought!
Yet who, in darkness, ever clearly sees?
Or, from life's puzzles causal forces frees?
This is a gift to one by nature fraught
With insight — one intuitively taught
The deepest truths beneath philosophies.
Here, in the tranquil peace that nurtures mind,
Thought's reasoner and master lived and died;
But, ere he died, his wisdom greatly won
New truths and ways; and, dying, left behind
The key to larger truths, and ways more wide,
By which all minds may follow Emerson.

The Sage of Concord

Peaceful and simple was the life he led,
 Away from din of trade or fashion's pride;
 A modest home his genius dignified.
And when, from forth that village home he sped,
 'Twas not in pleasure's flower-strewn paths to
 tread;
 But to spread out to all the country wide
 What, else, his simple life might tend to hide.
Over the world his famous sayings fled;
 And men revered him, for his words were true,
While his imagination, clear and bright,
 Like sunshine, shone his sober wisdom
 through.
The visions, pictured in his mental sight,
 He told in earnest words till all men knew
And blessed the Sage of Concord for his light.

The Port Philosopher

A thinker more than student: mind intent
 To grasp the soul of things — no traveler
 Seeking for wisdom in strange lands afar;
But, on discovery intently bent,
His thoughts, in daring voyage, he often sent
 Through paths more dark than farthest Africa;
 Through space beyond remotest gleam of star,
Till darkness, starlight, space and time were spent.
 All self-contained his thinkings and his world:
 Nature he saw, within his daily round,
Stretching more vast than grasp of human mind,
 The while Imagination wide unfurled
 Her wings o'er slower way and common bound
Of thought, the quicker, clearer way to find.

The Thinker and the Doer

The Minute-man and Emerson!—two things
Here, on this lovely river bank, abide,
Inscription and the statue. Thoughts are
strangely tied
By place and circumstance. The poet sings
“The shot heard round the world:” on fame’s great
wings
The Minute-man and poet, side by side,
Bear forth brave Freedom’s challenge far and
wide
To homes of labor, palaces of kings.
~~Two leaders of a nation~~, Energy
Allied with Wisdom—~~one makes~~ not alone
A people’s strength: while manliness ~~may~~ fight
Successful battle, winning liberty,
Wisdom builds safely Freedom’s corner-stone,
And keeps her pure and guiding torch alight.

The Wayside House

The Wayside House, where Hawthorne lived, is
shown

To hosts of visitors who come to see
Historic Concord—and this spot to me
Is full of recollections all my own;
And thoughts of long-ago still give their tone
To picturings of later memory;

For past this house my pathway used to be
Mornings and evenings in the days long flown.

The place is haunted ever by romance,
Mingling the author with the mystery
Of his weird tales. Above he used to pace
Upon the hill-top, plotting circumstance
In tragic scenes of awful witchery—
But in those days we seldom saw his face.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Nathaniel Hawthorne

Romance of Wonderland! What mystic light—
 “A light that never was on land or sea,”
 Yet true beyond Earth’s dull reality—
Shines on his pictures marvelously bright,
Revealing to our rapt, admiring sight
 The splendor of an ideality
 That gilds, with artist sheen, the scenes that
 he
Calls up before us by his magic might!
 Magician? Aye: at Hawthorne’s potent call
 Spirits of fancies, fair and fierce, arise
In mimic world where each must play his part:
 Through lovely scenes the awful mingles; all
 Combine to set before our spell-bound eyes
The beautiful creations of his art.

The Old Manse

I can remember, sixty years ago,
This time-worn manse; nor Hawthorne yet had
told

Its mosses; ancient then, it seemed as old
As now. In the bright sunset's ruddy glow,
Whose lovely lights o'er all the landscape show,
Like fairy tints, their crimson and their gold,
I half forget its years, its mosses, mould,
All that would tell of time's impairing flow.

Here lived the ministers. I still can see,

Through childhood's recollections, one whose
head

And hands, in trembling age, were raised in prayer.

Here Emerson once lived. In forty-three

Hawthorne came here when he was newly wed—
Old manse, how many mosses do you wear!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Henry B. Thoreau

Thoreau's lone hermitage was by the shore
Of Walden where, with little labor, he
Set up his house, and lived most frugally.
His luxury was leisure, and his store
Was nature; o'er whose treasures he would pore,
And find in strange, wild things society,
Whose ways and wants and acts most lovingly
He studied. What the wonder that this lore
Gave him the thought that we should simplify
Our lives, that, like the insects, birds, and flowers,
We may enjoy the sunshine and the breeze,
Green fields and trees; nor constantly deny
Ourselves sweet indolence of idle hours
And charms of contemplation and of ease!

PICTURES ANN FANCIES

Louisa M. Alcott

Louisa Alcott tells, in many a tale,
Of little people acting good or ill
From the quick impulses of wayward will:
This her life-work. Her stories never fail;
For all romance, wit, humor, mirth, avail,
And tears sometimes, their pleasant pages fill.
The little folk, with merry laughter, still
Keep green her memory; and years assail
In vain her pleasing immortality.
So hath she won, by tenderness and truth,
And loving words and many winning ways,
The children's hearts, that her bright tales will be
Impressions deeply stamped in plastic youth,
To guide in honor many older days.

Sleepy Hollow

Though life be tranquil here, yet, after this,
Is there a life of more tranquillity
Within each quiet grave's small boundary?
Can Death our hopes and passions then dismiss
With the cold touch of his dissolving kiss?
Ah! who may gauge this deepest mystery,
Momentous secret of the life to be?—
Eternal sleep or waking?— pain or bliss?
But restful seems the last abiding place
In Sleepy Hollow of the village dead.
Here lieth Emerson; the Alcotts here;
Hawthorne and Thoreau. Genius, virtue, grace,
And reach of thought were in the lives they led;
But larger thought now theirs, and sight more clear.

By the Bridge

Along the river bank the clouds throw down
Quick shadows on the fields. So slow the stream
It doth not stir the water-lilies' gleam,
White on the river's blue. Quaint shades of brown
Lurk under the rude bridge. The drowsy town
Behind me makes no sound to break my dream;
But all rests sleepily; and it would seem
That nature here can seldom wear a frown;
That rural life is passing happily
Within the pretty houses underneath
The shading elms that make the landscape fair;
That here abides profound tranquillity,
While restfulness and somnolence bequeath
The dreamer wondrous visions sweet and rare.



FLORIDA



PICTURES AND FANCIES

Fable Land

Fountain of Youth! The Spaniards sought it here,
Thinking this unknown Florida might be
Enchanted land of magic wizardry
And marvels strange. What wonder that, with spear
And sword, those errant knights who knew not fear
Came, in the pride of their bold chivalry,
To win that famous myth of poesy!
In visions Ponce de Leon saw it clear,
But quaffed his draught of immortality
At last from death's dark fountain. Still, the same
As when the visionary Spaniard came,
Come voyagers now with fond imaginings
Of health. Eternal youth can never be,
But this sweet clime that golden dream still brings.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Palm Beach

A charming breeze is wafted from the sea
O'er richly-tinted waves; upon the blue
White clouds are sailing; bright in scarlet hue
Blooms the hibiscus; every plumed palm-tree
Rustles its waving branches merrily;
Of shore and lake enchanting is the view,
Whose charms my fascinated spirit woo
Until I share the sweet tranquillity
Of this delightful Summerland, where frost
Is barred, and whose soft kiss breathes fragrant
bloom.
When in the icy North cold Winter reigns,
And all the flowers and verdant things are lost
Beneath deep snows — the northern year's sad
doom —
On these bright shores fair Summer still remains.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Paradise

Here is a clime by Nature always blest,
Balmy as Eden's ancient Paradise;
Here lusty pleasures buxomly entice,
And the sweet South bids welcome to each guest,
In Summer's garb and brilliant colors drest.
She bids her trees and flowers with her rejoice,
And breathe with her in sweetly singing voice,
Filling all hearts with her own happy zest.
And if a Norther comes, its power is tamed
Ere it can reach Lake Worth. Here Mildness
reigns
With Beauty. Even the despotic sea
Whose might is by resistless waves proclaimed,
To thee, Palm Beach, a wooing sweetness deigns,
And wears a soft and lovely smile for thee.

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**OCTOBER SNOW ON
OBERSALZBERG**

Snow on My Pines

Snow on my pines and stormy winds that freeze!—
 So Winter, monarch of this mountain land,
 Thus early comes, with strong and icy hand,
To spread his snowy banner. Melodies
Of balmy Summer, borne on gentle breeze
 When its delightful softness round me fanned,
 And all my forest beauty, at command
Of this rude summons, now, alas! must cease.
 Adieu, the year's sweet loveliness! Adieu,
 Green slopes, bright woods! Each gay and
 winsome hue
Must now be hidden in a snowy shroud,
And all be whiteness like the veil of cloud
 So often drawn around my lonely head
 As if, indeed, the stricken world were dead.

When Winter Comes

From upland pastures, slopes of brightest green,
Oft moistened as the drifting clouds flew by
In summer, but where now great snow-fields lie,
The cows are driven down: on each is seen,
Entwined around her horns, a wreath; the queen
More gaily decked. Through chill and stormy
sky,
Adown steep paths, most carefully they hie
To winter homes below. Faint heard between
Far mountain voices, sweet has been the sound
Of all their tinkling bells. Each noisy brook
That, through the summer, into deeps below
Leaped amid rocks, and laughed at each rebound,
Will soon be hushed; each lovely little nook
Where wild flowers grew, be hidden under snow.

Waiting for May

Henceforth for seven months no voice will come,
 But Winter's, from the skirt of pines that grow
 Along my foothills on the slopes below.
Though I may hear, in icy dreams, the hum
Of Summer life, yet Nature will be dumb,
 Her voices muffled under fields of snow;
 Silent my steeps except when wild winds blow,
Alas, how unlike Summer! Still and numb,
 A giant sentry o'er a frozen land,
 What dreary watch is mine! But while I sleep
And freeze on this cold watch, Time's sleepless
 train
 Of icy months sweeps on, a joyless band,
 Until May comes to warm each snowy steep,
And wake my world to Spring's young life again.



TUNIS

Suggestions of Arabian Nights

Turks, Arabs, Jews, Greeks, Nubians, Bedouins,
Moors,
Crowd busy streets; their costumes, quaint and
gay,
Flash brilliant colors in the flaunting day,
That whiter shines than, in our clime, it pours
Through dimmer skies. Imagination soars,
By the suggestion of these scenes, away
Where tales of the Arabian Nights display,
Before our recollection, magic stores
Of marvels and of color: streets like these
In winding maze, oft lined with gay bazars
Where tawny merchants, cross-legged, sit for sales,
Like spiders waiting victims. So one sees
This Arab-Moorish land, wh ch seldom mars,
In tint or shape, Queen Scherazade's old tales.

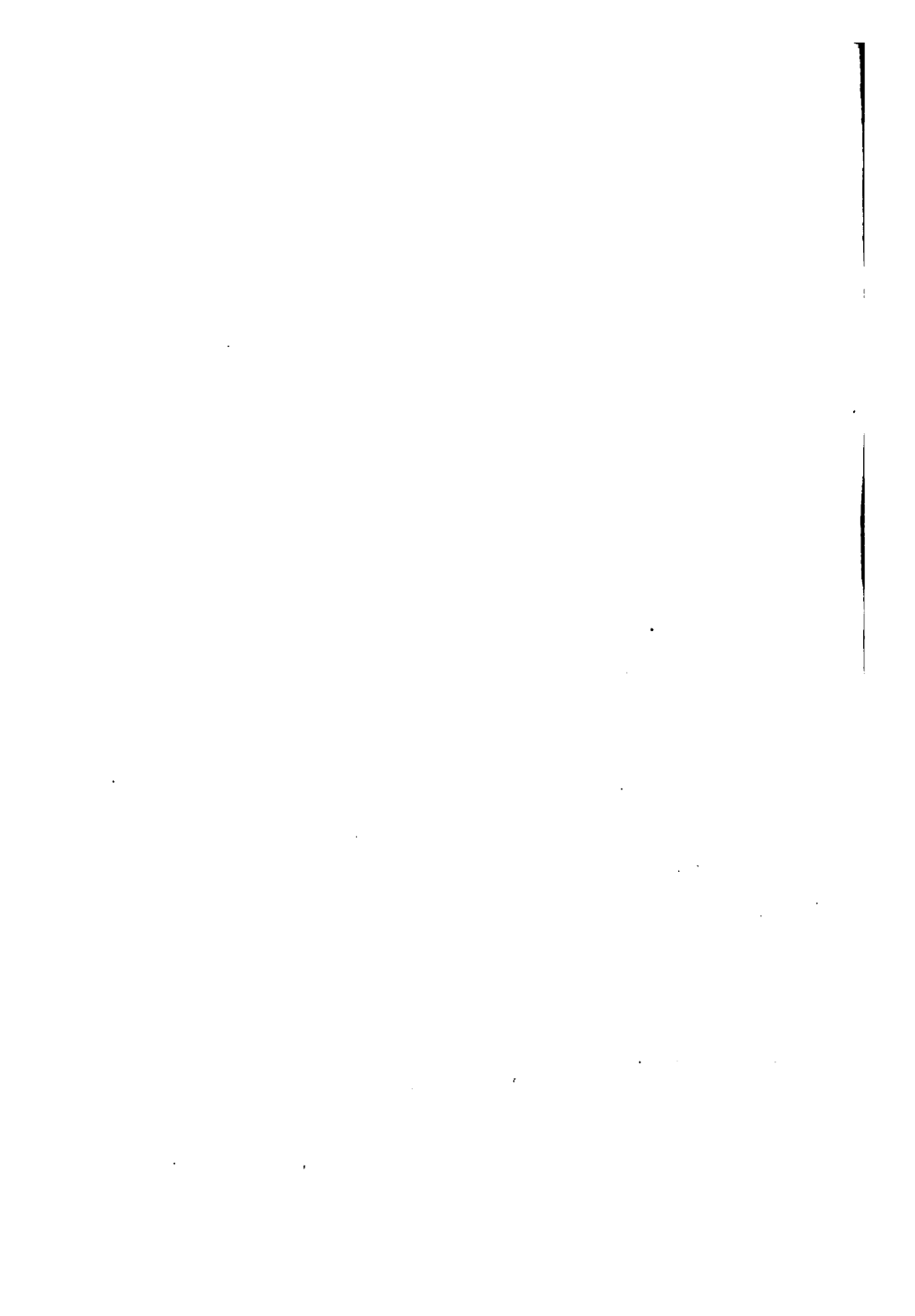
PICTURES AND FANCIES

Each Has His Story

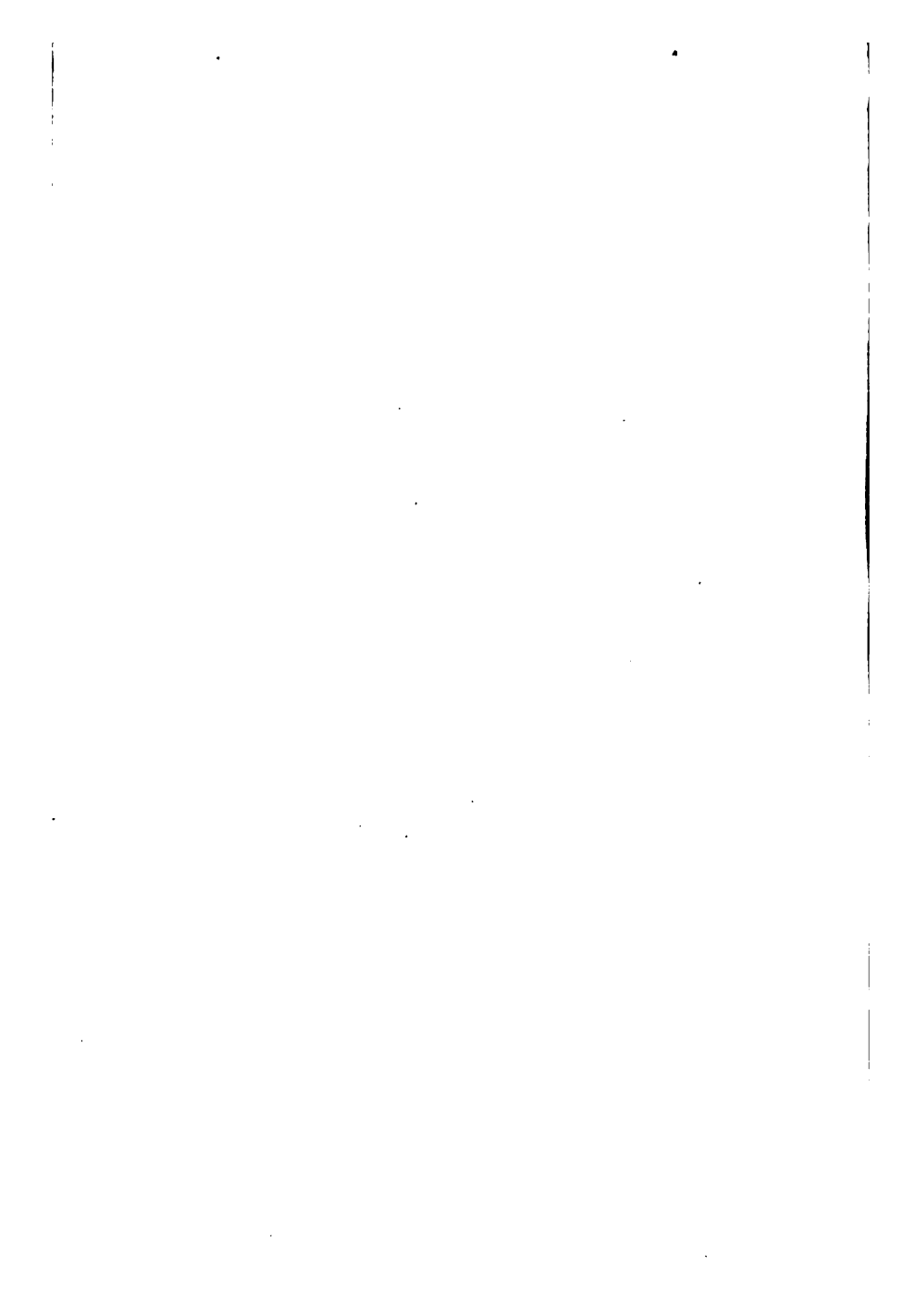
Land of romance! Like muffled Arab clad,
Haroun Alraschid roamed in former days,
Seeking adventures in the crooked ways
And narrow streets, like these, of old Bagdad.
Yon Moor, with tattered garb and visage sad,
And fierce, wild eyes in which weird passion
plays,
Might tell a tale that would as much amaze;
Yon Nubian playing to the listening lad,
Yon blind man, standing where dim shadows fall,
Naked and old, might each, with flashing eye
And hero step, have dared adventures high:
Each has his story. Every time-worn wall
Suggests romance in quaintness of decay,
And hints of wonders here, long passed away.

The Mosque

Unless a Moslem, none may venture in
The sacred mosques; and he must doff his
shoes
On entering: a symbol, if you choose,
Of putting off uncleanness of sin;
Or to keep clean the holy mats. Within—
I donned the garb—there are no seats or pews,
But pillared aisles in long unvaried views.
If plain and clean simplicity may win,
The Moslem church is safe. About the door
And porch the Arabs cluster, gossiping—
An Arab gossips like a very woman—
A cadî comes, whom all must bow before;
A stately sheik in snow-white costuming;
Or pious Turk intent upon his Koran.



THE BIRTH OF BEAUTY



The Early Man

The early man, when life was savagery
In primal eons, like a wolf or bear
Faced with brute eyes the world—sharp teeth
to tear,
Strong limbs to seize and carry off his prey—
No pity in his heart called for delay
Of his fierce appetite. Nor foul, nor fair,
Was aught to him. From forth his forest lair
He came to forage for his food each day.
And then, as now, the forest trees were high,
And fair, beneath, the little wild flowers grew
By him unheeded; brightly in the sky
Shone down at night bright starlight from the blue;
But Beauty was not born: man was a beast;
And his best instincts were to hunt and feast.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Nature's Appeal

One day he rested by a babbling stream,
And, casting down his weary body there,
Espied a daisy blooming bright and fair
On the green bank. Why did its modest gleam
Now catch and hold his eye? It did not seem
A thing to eat; yet with bewildered stare
He gazed; and, to his heart, an unknown care,
Or pleasure, came. As, in amazing dream,
A vision sometimes came to him in sleep,
So now, upon him, dawned a something strange,
And, in its strangeness, he forgot his chase
And brutal appetite: still would he keep
His eyes upon the flower; nor all the range
Of the wild forest lured him from that place.

Primal Awakenings

Nor darkness broke the spell: for while he slept
Bright daisies came in visions to his brain—
Daisies and daisies, a confusing train
Of images. He knew not why sleep kept
The daisies in his eyes. Awaking, leapt
Upon his feet in darkness, and in pain
That what he saw in sleep would not remain;
Then groped he for the daisies; and he wept
Because he could not find them. Stung anew
By tears, he wandered till the daylight grew
Bright in the east, and then, a fawn he slew:
The tender creature turned to his its eyes
Appealingly for pity; and surprise
Again, of new emotion, thrilled him through.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Transformation

So was the wondrous Spirit of Beauty born,
 Glimmering dimly through the dusk of night,
 But growing always in a dawning light,
Transforming beast to man. This primal dawn
Of Beauty's inspirations marked the morn
 Of man's intelligence, translating quite
 Brute instincts into reason's loftier flight
Of human thought; and the long night forlorn
 Was gone forever. Nature brightly smiled;
 And, in that smile, the lifted eyes of men
Perceived new meaning, as high thoughts divine
 Responded: softness came upon the wild,
 And grace where only brutal life had been—
So Beauty sets upon the world her sign.

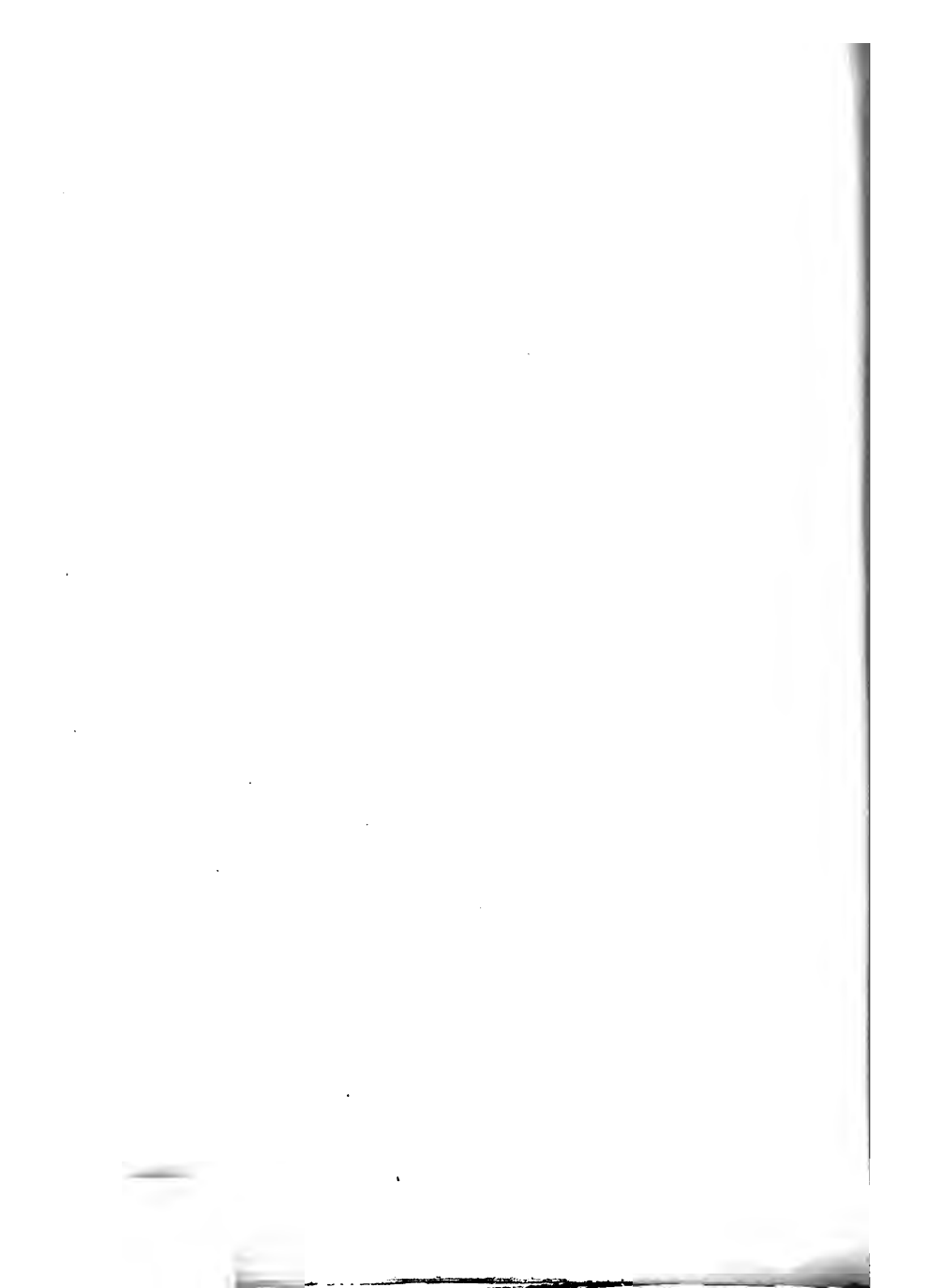
Beauty is Harmony

The light divine that shines in human faces—
The clearest light of all philosophy,
Illumining life's deepest mystery—
Is born and fed by Beauty's charms and graces:
Through all complexities we see the traces
Of harmonies appear when forcibly
Atoms are loudly clashed, or silently
Are moved life's organisms of countless races.
Beauty is harmony, the gracious speeches
In which Dame Nature constantly delights,
Angelic tones, the music of the spheres
Whose starry melody from Heaven down-reaches,
The fairy whispers of Earth's fairest sprites,
Signs to our eyes, and voices to our ears.

The Song of the Universe

Signs, symbols, voices, music, harmony—
Beauty is poetry of life, the grace
That lights the soul, its triumph o'er the base;
Romance and charm of every mystery,
Glory and interest of history,
Woven enchantingly round time and place,
Forever lighting life's exciting chase, ~~and~~
Divinest teaching. Universally
The world is full of order and of law,
So Beauty tells us constantly by signs
That over all creation widely span,
Moving our souls by gentleness or awe;
Interpreters of purpose in designs
Of God, of voices that He speaks to man.

RONDEAUX



Whither Away, O Wind?

Whither away, O Wind? And dost thou bear
Healing or harm? Art cruel, or art kind?
Or, in thy haste, perchance thou dost not care—
Whither away, O Wind?

Seek'st thou, wild spirit with the flying hair,
Some hapless ship, upon the sea, to find
And whelm in billows while thou shriek'st in air?
Whither away, O Wind?

Or would'st thou rather woo than fiercely dare?
Linger among the flowers, to sweets inclined,
And gather up and breathe their odors rare?
Whither away, O Wind?

PICTURES AND FANCIES

At Night

Night in thy darkness dwelleth Fear
And all the crew that shun the light,
Shadows and ghosts and spectres drear,
At night—

Night, when the clock's slow hours we hear,
If grief or pain sweet sleep affright,
No medicine can dry the tear
At night—

Night, when thy moon is shining clear,
And lovers' hearts and hands unite,
The silence of thy hours is dear
At night—

Night, when thy myriad stars appear,
The world, beneath thy dome, is bright;
And Heaven seemeth then more near
At night.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Alone

Alone, I wander in bright, pleasant places,
Hoping to catch, of Pleasure, her sweet tone;
But Pleasure flies with all her joys and graces,
Because I am alone.

What is it, from my yearning heart, that chases
The beautiful which I would make my own?
Beauty and Pleasure memory displaces,
And I am not alone.

Ah! gladly welcome I what thus erases
The Present! When it makes my heart its throne
I hear sweet voices, see my dear-loved faces,
And am not then alone.

Within These Walls

What subtle spirit of mysterious might
Dwelleth unseen within these living halls?
What high intelligence its torch doth light
Within these walls?

My soul, what strong, though mystic, ties unite
This home and thee? What voice so strangely calls
The world, by sound, smell, tasting, feeling, sight,
Within these walls?

What art thou, O my soul? A mortal wight,
Demon, or angel? Ah, the thought appalls,
That, to thyself, thou art a mystery quite,
Within these walls!

Time, Break Thy Glass!

Time, break thy glass, and stay thy flight!
Why should the days so quickly pass?
Rest thee, and learn sweet rest's delight!—
Time, break thy glass!

Time, drop thy cruel scythe of might,
That kills so many hopes, alas!
O spare the world thy ancient spite! —
Time, break thy glass!

Time, clear thy brow of gloom and fright!
Let smiles, within thy heart, amass
The soul's glad sunshine, warm and white! —
Time, break thy glass!

PICTURES AND FANCIES

More Light

The Parsee knelt, his hands outstretched to sky,
And prayed his Magian god, with dazzled sight:
"O blazing sun-god, give my hungry eye
More light!"

So Faith's devout disciples loudly cry,
Howe'er devotion make religion bright:
"Grant us the gift of gifts! We ask, Most High,
More light!"

Science, while seeking knowledge that would fly
To larger truth, must seek, for such high flight,
The gift so oft besought of deity,
More light.

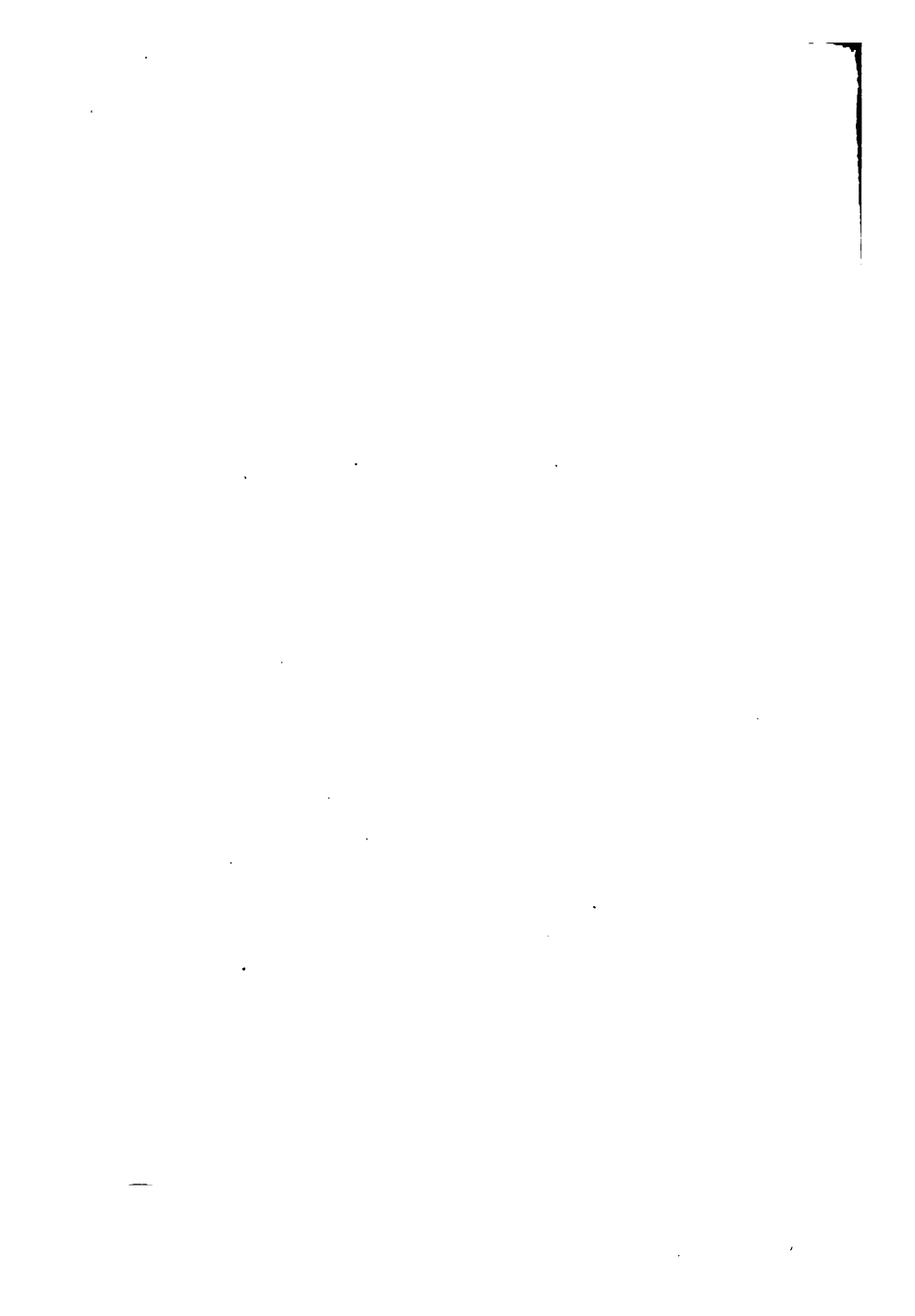
Farewell!

Farewell!—The word doth sadness send,
Though fortune seem to promise well,
And smiling Fates our hopes attend—
Farewell!

Farewell!—A word the heart to rend
When parting seems, of love, the knell;
Or far away from home we wend—
Farewell!

Farewell!—A word we oft extend
To lighter partings when no swell
Of sorrow, to our thoughts, we lend—
Farewell!

Farewell!—A word that still must end
Kindest good-bye our lips can tell,
However well beloved our friend—
Farewell!



**TRANSLATIONS
FROM THE GERMAN OF
HANS SACHS**

7

Conrad Doubt and the Priest

At Sommerhausen lived a priest
Who did not hesitate the least
To fool and trick his peasants well,
As this our tale proceeds to tell.

He had a habit when he preached,
And to an end his sermon reached,
To say: "My children, you I tell,
Who follow all my teachings well,
Will, without doubt, be saved, and be
The heirs of Heaven's eternity."
Then from his pulpit he descended
When all his teachings so were ended,
And took, with solemn face, his way
To do each office of the day.

There was a peasant, Conrad Doubt,
Who was a simple, clownish lout,
So foolish in simplicity
He thought "doubt" meant himself, and he
Was thus shut out, and so must be
In danger of eternal fire;
And knew not why he had such ire
Poured on his head. This grieved him so
That he resolved at length to go
And ask the priest his faults to show.
He said, "I pray you, father, tell
Why under ban I ever dwell;

PICTURES AND FANCIES

What have I done so very evil
That you should give me to the devil
On every Sunday, when you say
At sermon end, in solemn way,
'All, without Doubt, are saved'? Then all
Look at me when my name you call.
Thus do your sermons ever end,
And thus, poor me, you always send
Into the fire. Pray let me know
For what ill deeds you treat me so."

The priest at once resolved that he
Would profit by simplicity
So dull; then said, "O Conrad, pay
Attention to the words I say:
Each peasant gives a peck of peas
To me, for which I give to these
My blessing; it is only you
Who give no peas as others do,
Who get no blessing." Conrad Doubt
Thought that the secret now was out;
So home he went, and brought the peas,
Hoping the crafty priest to please.

The priest, who laughed in secret, said:
"There will be blessings on your head,
And, Conrad, you are like the rest;
Henceforth you always shall be blest."
When Sunday came good Conrad Doubt
Most gladly heard the sermon out—
Heard the smug priest serenely tell:
"Who follows all my teachings well

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Will thus be saved, and ever blest;
And Conrad Doubt among the rest."
But the priest's joke soon came to light,
For he related it one night
In public house amid much laughter;
From which, of course, it came soon after
To Conrad's ears, who felt its shame,
And thought the priest was much to blame.
His indignation grew and grew
Until he felt that he must do
Something to pay for all the shame
The priest had put upon his name.
At length this simple peasant hit
Upon a plan that had some wit:
He to confession boldly came,
And told the priest, as if in shame,
He had a sin he must relate,
That he, within the fast-time, ate
Some eggs.

The priest, on mischief bent,
Thought this a chance most excellent
To do another trick, so cried,
"O heretic! you have denied
Your Lord, like Peter; and defied
The Church. You are the devil's own,
And now must reap what you have sown:
Both flesh and blood the eggs contained;
So you your precious soul have stained."

PICTURES AND FANCIES

"But they were boiled; no flesh had they,
Nor blood," quoth Conrad; "wherefore say
That I my soul have thrown away?"

The priest replied: "In Rome alone
Can you your grievous sin atone."

"Alas!" cried Conrad, "penance set,
Some penance that will save me yet!"

Then said the priest: "Give instant heed!
Your sin I may forgive, indeed,
If, in my garden, you will sow
Me peas in many a careful row."

Conrad replied: "That will I do,
With many grateful thanks to you:
Tomorrow early I'll be there,
And sow the peas with utmost care."
Then, smiling cunningly, the priest
His simulated sin released.

Next morn was Conrad up to seize
An early hour, to boil the peas
In a great kettle; and the while
He smiled to match the priest's sly smile.
"Ho-ho!" unto himself he thought,
"Boiled eggs! boiled peas! 'tis naught for naught."
Then to the garden came he, where
He found the priest, already there,
Who mildly looked while Conrad's hand
Sowed well the peas upon his land.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Still cunning was the priestly smile
As simple Conrad toiled the while.
"Ah!" thought the priest, "Simplicity
May prove a precious thing to me."

But Conrad thought, "Dear priest, no smile
Of your mild face can me beguile;
Before two months will come and go,
You may not then be smiling so."

Then Easter came with joyful play,
And soon it was the month of May.
Elsewhere pea-vines were up and green,
But not a pea-vine could be seen
In the priest's garden. Days went on,
And peas were blooming, but not one
In the priest's plot. He was in doubt
How this strange thing had come about;
At last decided that wherein
He fooled the peasant was the sin
That made his garden fail to yield
A single pea in all the field.
It was for him a serious thought:
He had not acted as he ought,
And lo! his garden thus became
A silent token of his shame.

So for the peasant now he sent,
His mind on restitution bent:
"What proper payment should I yield
For sowing peas within my field?"

PICTURES AND FANCIES

He asked the simple man, who smiled,
And answered him in accents mild:
"Nine crowns undoubtedly would do."

The priest was startled, but he drew
The money forth, and Conrad paid;
Then to the peasant slowly said:
"Because God lays a ban on me,
I pay you this; for it may be
I erred, to make your penance yield
Your peas and work to sow my field.
So may the good Lord once more please
To let my garden yield me peas."

The money pocketed, the man—
This simple peasant—thus began:
"Listen, my father, while I tell
How all this barrenness befell:
I learned your artifice, how you
Mocked me with words that were not true;
Then much I pondered in my mind
How I could pay you up in kind.
I think the good Lord in me wrought,
And gave to me the simple thought
To boil the peas that in your field
I sowed for you; for they might yield,
Though they were boiled, abundantly,
If life in boiled eggs still could be;
If flesh and blood were yet in these,
Why not some life in well-boiled peas?
This simple reasoning is mine;
I paid you, father, in your coin."

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The priest replied, "No piety
Exists, I see, in roguery;
Your trick was fair and just to me—
Summa summarum: which, my lad,
Means some are good, and some things bad."

No further answer Conrad made;
His peas and work had been repaid
So well that he was quite content
As homeward joyfully he went;
While the priest's Latin—strange to say—
Seemed to explain all faults away.

MORAL

Whoever seeks, with tricks, to fool
More simple men should heed the rule,
That roguery provokes the same,
And men are only fools in name.
A mocker wields a two-edged sword
Which cuts both ways. Oft mockery
Or laugh of biting raillery
May be a source of misery,
Or stir a fool's brain with its sting
Till out of folly wit may spring.
If one at nine-pins sometimes wins
He should, in turn, set up the pins;
Or, if another wins a game,
Should not his luck misfortune name.
It is but fair, in the same way
As we have won, our debts to pay;
Who then objects to pay the tax
Should never play — so says Hans Sachs.

The Fountain of Youth

Sixty-two years!—Yes, I am old;
The weight of years is manifold!
While they are pressing hard on me,
My thoughts go back in memory
To the good days of early prime;
Then comes regret for wasted time.
As on my bed I, restless, lay,
I wished for something to delay
Old age; some ointment to restore
Those gifts of youth I have no more.

While in such meditation deep,
The present fading into sleep,
I dreamed that I was wide awake
And heard the murmur fountains make:
Before me was a basin bright,
Its marble glittering in my sight,
Wherein the water's pleasant flow
Through twelve great pipes appeared to go,
And in the basin marvels show;
Whatever burdens age had brought,
Though eighty years their harms had wrought,
Who in that fountain bathed an hour
Renewed his youth by its sweet power;
Health, mind, and force came back to him,
His buoyant heart, each lusty limb.

Nations and races of the earth
Assembled here for this new birth

PICTURES AND FANCIES

In multitudes. Knight, monk and priest,
Tradesman and peasant, to this Feast
Of Youth had come to be released
From weight of years. No one so high,
Or low, but he this cure would try.
Crowded were paths and roads that led
Out of all lands to Fountain Head
Of Youth. On wagons, carts, sleds, came
The wretched, crippled, old, blind, lame.
Some came in wheelbarrows; some came there
On backs of friends—all to repair
Mischiefs of Time. Crooked and bald,
Toothless and wrinkled, many crawled;
Misshapen, bleary-eyed, stumbled they,
Coughing and wheezing on their way;
There were such pantings, groans, and sighs
As in a hospital arise.

Twelve men, upon the fountain's rim,
Helped on each one whose feeble limb
Had not the strength to climb within,
There to be strong and young again;
For when an hour had passed away
Within the midst of strengthening play
Of magic waters, with light limb
They gaily leaped the fountain's brim,
Beautiful, rosy-tinted, fresh,
With rounded shapes and healthy flesh,
With cheerful minds, and free from fears,
As if they had but twenty years.
While thus, in health, they sprang away,
New patients in their places lay.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

Then, in my dreaming sleep, thought I:
"Thy two-and-sixty years now try;
Why let this chance of youth pass by?
Thy deafened ears, thy wrinkled face,
Why not these signs of age erase?
What hinders thee, in serious truth,
From bathing in the Fount of Youth?"
Then I put off my clothes, it seemed—
But this, indeed, I also dreamed—
And climbed the marble basin's brim,
Intent, when o'er its magic rim,
To free myself from forty years,
Their burden, tax, and crushing fears.

When I was stepping in—alas!—
Vision and sleep at once did pass.
Then loud I laughed: "What would'st thou win?
Like an old snake, would'st cast thy skin?
No use: it sticks to thee like sin!
Wear thy old hide; it fits thee well;
Or, it fits not, do not tell.
There grows no herb the plants among
Hath any power to make thee young;
There is no mineral spring that slacks
The faults of age—Alas, Hans Sachs!"

The Gown and the Pigskin

I

A farmer had a wife both young and fair,
Who had a gown of color fine,
Of which exceeding proud was she.
Slender was she of shape, of body rare,
Like anvil-stock each curving line.
He loved her dotingly.
She said: "Dear husband, my love, know
If cruel Death should come for thee,
In my fine gown, I would thee sew."
The farmer, doubtingly,
Would test her love, what it would be.
Into the wood he hied;
To Heinz, his man, he cried:
"With berries stain me well
Like blood, to tell
A great tree fell,
My life to quell;
Upon the wagon, carefully
With green twigs cover me.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

II

"Carry me home, and say, a tree killed me;
So may I know my wife's true will,
If she her gown will give."
His man obeyed his wish most faithfully:
To the farm drove him, lying still
Like one that did not live.
The servant wept with eyes quite red;
The wife said, "Wherefore weepest thou?"
He answered, "For my master dead,
Struck dead by cruel bough."
She said, "Thy words are foolish now;
Art thou tree-stricken, too?"
Then, while her husband she did view,
The servant said: "Go, mistress, go,
And bring the gown in which to sew
His body; for thou well dost know
That thou hast promised so."
She said, "O, no! a pigskin rough,
For him, indeed, is well enough."

PICTURES AND FANCIES

III

She had him roughly sewn in this coarse skin,
But head and feet it did not cover,
The pigskin was too short.
She said, "My husband, thou look'st queer within
This grave-cloth, but I have no other!"
He wakened with a snort,
And cried, "If I like pigskin look,
Thou false and shameless thing!
It is because thy word I took;
Is this the gown that thou would'st bring?
Thy faithless heart I now have read."
Her craft still served her best:
"I knew thou did'st but jest,
And art not dead;
But mocking me," she said;
"No blood upon my gown be shed
Until thy life be fled;
Clean will I keep it, if you will—"
And he believed her still.

In, the King Drinks!

There is upon the banks of Rhine
A custom of a quaint design:
On Three King's Eve is joyful call
Of every one to festival.
They first elect, in frolic sport,
A Fest-king and his mimic court,
Steward and marshal, doctor, cook,
Captain—all sworn upon a book—
Chaplain and huntsman, chamberlain,
Carver and waiters—all must feign
Their offices in merry rule,
Or feel the stroke of the Court-Fool.
By lot is given each several part,
Which must be played with cunning art.

The king is chiefest jester; he,
Grand master of the revelry.
High over all they give him place;
Upon the ceiling he must trace
A cross, the emblem of his sway,
There to remain for many a day.
Then they all wish him happy reign;
And each his office must maintain
And serve him as is served a king,
Nor slight his place in anything.
Who fails to do his proper part,
Or fills his place with little art,
Or wrongly names one of the court,

PICTURES AND FANCIES

The Fool belabors, in gay sport,
With leathern mace.

When the king drinks,
Each to the others nods and winks;
All loudly cry: "Lo, the King drinks!"
Through the great hall rings gaily out
This greeting in one common shout:
"Lo, the king drinks!" When this cry rings,
If any fail, on him it brings,
As penalty, a quart of wine,
For such offense, the royal fine.
So laughter fills the joyous court;
A half-night spent in merry sport.

Amid the laughs was a priest
Who, of the drinkers, drank not least;
Indeed, so many times he drank
That oft his head in slumber sank —
The tipsy slumber of the wine,
That famous nectar of the Rhine.
When he should shout, he oft would snore,
And paid the king's tax o'er and o'er.

His housekeeper was with him there —
For with the men did oft repair
Women and children to this feast —
To her confessed our drowsy priest,
And begged of this good-natured dame,
That she would spare him so much shame,
And nudge to wakefulness his blinks
When rose the cry: "Lo, the king drinks!"

PICTURES AND FANCIES

And so she did with such success
That his drink fines were somewhat less.
At length the festival was o'er;
The king a commoner once more;
And every grand official high,
Cobbler or tailor, with a sigh,
At two o'clock went home to bed,
With staggering feet and reeling head.
So went our priest, in safety led
By his kind servant dame, and she
Was very near as full as he.

But scarce in bed did three hours pass
When the bell rang for early mass.
Dazed and bewildered still was he
When he came to his sacristy;
Dozing he at the altar stood,
And read the mass as best he could.
He felt strange visions vaguely go
Through his dim brain in drowsy flow;
But when in silent mass he bent,
His priestly office from him went;
All present duties were ignored;
Soundly he slept, and snored and snored.

Now rose, within his sleeping brain,
The Three King's festival again;
He dreamed its pleasures o'er and o'er;
He drank great draughts of wine once more;
He heard the noisy tumult ring;
He heard the feasters cheer their king.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

His snoring scared the sacristan,
Who round the altar quickly ran
And pulled his surplice with good will;
The priest awoke, in dreamland still;
He gained his feet; he thought his dame
Had nudged him that the moment came
To cheer the king; so loudly he
Sent forth his shout of revelry:
"Lo, the king drinks!" Thrice he cried out;
And the church echoed back each shout.

Then he awoke, and rubbed his eyes
In mingled shame and dull surprise;
Stood like a fifer whose false play
Hath led the dancers all astray.
Then he took heart and slowly spoke:
"Good people, this is but a joke;
It is not serious; so forget
What you have heard; nor ever let
The words, I late have spoken, be
Treasured in any memory."

The men and women laughed, and thought
How it had chanced. The priest then sought
His house and bed, that sleep again
Might clear from drunkenness his brain.
But when the bishop heard of this
He took away the benefice,
That so this careless priest might be
Taught into good sobriety.

PICTURES AND FANCIES

MORAL

Out of this tale a priest may take
Its moral: for religion's sake
He should preserve his good repute
Beyond all question or dispute.
Who sets himself in place to be
The people's teacher is not free
To ever touch debauchery;
So would he soil his saintly place,
And all good teachings thus efface.
If, in his life, he liveth well,
It shows more good than he can tell;
Such life a sermon is, more true
Than any preaching he can do.
What oft religion sadly lacks
Is noble life—so saith Hans Sachs.



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